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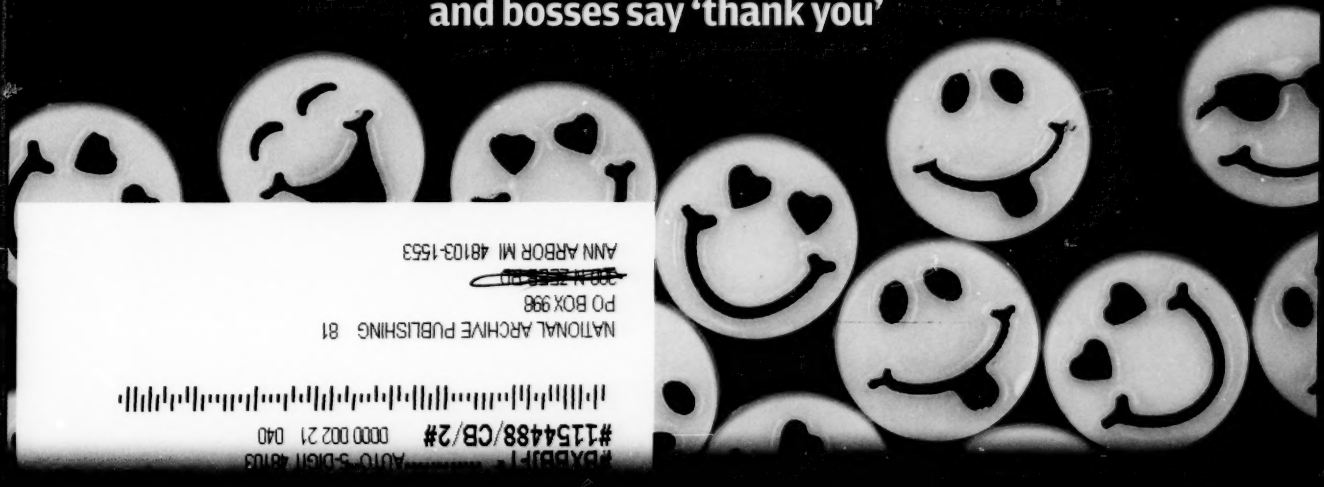

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THE TOP TEAM: USAA IT staffers Jackie Hewitt, Brett Lewis, Emily Bubela, CIO Greg Schwartz, Guta Woodley and Rick Eubanks.

18th Annual Report

100 BEST PLACES TO WORK IN IT 2011

15 When was the last time you went for a swim on your lunch break or bragged to your friends about your work? It happens every day for some fortunate IT employees.

How We Chose The Winners

20 We collected employer data and gathered satisfaction ratings from more than 29,000 IT workers.

Best of The Best

49 The organizations that have the best benefits, the most diverse workforces and the most training options.

ONLINE: Find the organization that suits you best based on size, region, turnover rate, diversity and more at **www.computerworld.com/2011bestplaces**

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SNOWPRO PHOTOGRAPHY

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HeadsUp

JASON MICZEK / BLOOMBERG VIA GETTY IMAGES

Apple paid Donnie and Kathy Fulbright $1.7 million last year to move out of their house in Maiden, N.C., to make way for the company's new $1 billion, 500-square-foot data center.

DATA CENTERS

Rural N.C. Becomes Popular IT Location

THE WESTERN half of North Carolina has become a magnet for giant data centers.

Apple's new $1 billion data center looms large in a satellite view of Maiden, N.C. The roof and sides of the 500,000-square-foot building are painted white to reflect the sun's heat.

Google has already built a $600 million data center in Lenoir, N.C., less than an hour's drive northwest of Maiden. And Facebook is building a $450 million, 300,000-square-foot data center in Forest City, N.C., just over an hour away to the southwest.

The area is an appealing location for data centers because it has relatively low-cost land as well as reliable and somewhat inexpensive electric power.

Tax breaks help as well. Apple received a 50% reduction in real estate taxes for 10 years and an 85% cut in personal property taxes. The economic development effort also included fast turnaround on permits and an on-site building inspector to help speed construction, said Scott Millar, president of North Carolina's Catawba County Economic Development Corp.

Apple's data center is creating about 50 direct jobs and 250 indirect jobs, such as positions for contractors who will work at the site. The construction work created 2,500 to 3,000 jobs.

But Todd Herms, town manager of Maiden (population 3,409), said he isn't expecting Apple to change the fundamental nature of the town, a Mayberry-type place where everybody knows one another.

– Patrick Thibodeau

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FINANCIAL SERVICES

NYSE Launches Cloud Service For Wall Street

NYSE Euronext's technology division this month announced what it called the first cloud service for the financial services industry.

NYSE Technologies said its Capital Markets Community Platform is designed to "increase business agility, simplify market access and reduce trading friction by using rapid, on-demand computing resources."

NYSE Euronext said that its 1,200 broker-dealer clients can purchase the computing power they need at a given time so they can focus on their core business operations rather than on the design and maintenance of complex IT infrastructures.

The cloud service is undergoing beta testing and will go live July 1. NYSE Technologies CEO Stanley Young said the service already has several customers, including Millennium Management, Pico Quantitative Trading and others he could not name publicly.

The platform, which resides in a new 100,000-square-foot data center, was built using VMware's vSphere cloud infrastructure management software, vShield security application, and vCloud Director, which pools virtual services, as well as EMC's VNX unified storage arrays.

Young called the offering a "community cloud" for capital markets and said it shouldn't be considered a public cloud like those offered by Google and Amazon.com.

– LUCAS MEARIAN

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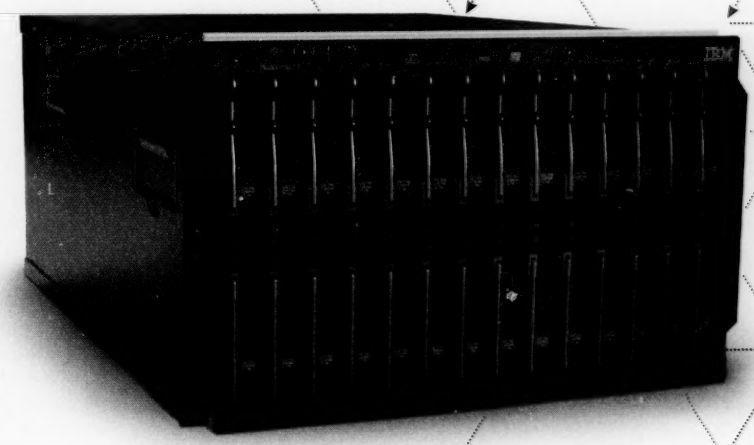

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1. The 40% cost savings are based on a comparison of the acquisition costs of 10 current generation HP rack optimized solutions (i.e., DL380 G7 Proliant with 10 GbE Ethernet and Fibre Channel infrastructure) to 10 current generation IBM BladeCenter and HS22 systems with converged fabric solutions from Brocade. See www-03.ibm.com/systems/bladecenter/hardware/openfabric/fcoe.html. The IBM solution includes chassis infrastructure. Pricing utilizes publicly available pricing per port for ToR ethernet and FC switching infrastructure as of Jan 2011. The 40% networking hardware costs savings result from eliminating separate Ethernet and Fibre Channel cards and switches in the deployment of an IBM BladeCenter FCoE solution for 10 servers and associated networking hardware in comparison to the HP solution. IBM, the IBM logo, ibm.com and BladeCenter are trademarks of International Business Machines Corp., registered in many jurisdictions worldwide. Other product and service names might be trademarks of IBM or other companies. A current list of IBM trademarks is available on the Web at www.ibm.com/legal/copytrade.shtml. Intel, the Intel logo, Xeon and Xeon Inside are trademarks of Intel Corporation in the U.S. and other countries.

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BETWEEN THE LINES
By John Klossner

SECURITY MONITOR

Advanced Security Tools Coming Soon

AN 18-MONTH-OLD cybersecurity research consortium organized by Northrop Grumman is making progress on several fronts and expects to have technologies ready to deploy in about a year, officials said at a briefing earlier this month.

The Northrop Grumman Cybersecurity Research Consortium has focused on improving mobile and cloud security and on reducing the cost of recovery from cyberattacks, said Robert Brammer, vice president of advanced technology and CTO at Northrop Grumman Information Systems.

Cloud security is a high priority for the consortium, which also includes MIT, Carnegie Mellon University and Purdue University, Brammer said. For example, researchers are studying how to use low-cost processors to perform specialized encryption tasks in a cloud environment, and the use of digital watermarking technologies to establish the integrity of data.

Another project involves optimizing the configuration and location of security sensors on computer networks. The goal is to place sensors in a network "so you don't slow it down, you don't generate too many false alarms, and you don't have to spend too much on sensors," said Eugene Spafford, a computer science professor at Purdue.

MIT is spearheading a project focused on automatically returning a computer to a clean state after a malware attack, said Ronald Rivest, an MIT computer science professor.

"Many machines are compromised daily," he said. "Cleaning up after these inevitable compromises leads to days of wasted effort by either the end users or by systems administrators."

In some cases, Northrop Grumman will use the consortium's research in its customers' networks. The universities are also free to seek other ways to commercialize research that they've conducted in-house, Spafford said.

– *Grant Gross, IDG News Service*

Micro Burst

In a survey of 1,400 CIOs,

51%

said they let employees use social media sites like Twitter and Facebook if it's for business purposes.

MOBILE COMMERCE

Fast Checkout Boosts Sales At Mobile Site

Crutchfield, an electronics retailer, has found that the easier a smartphone payment technology is for buyers to use, the greater the number of sales.

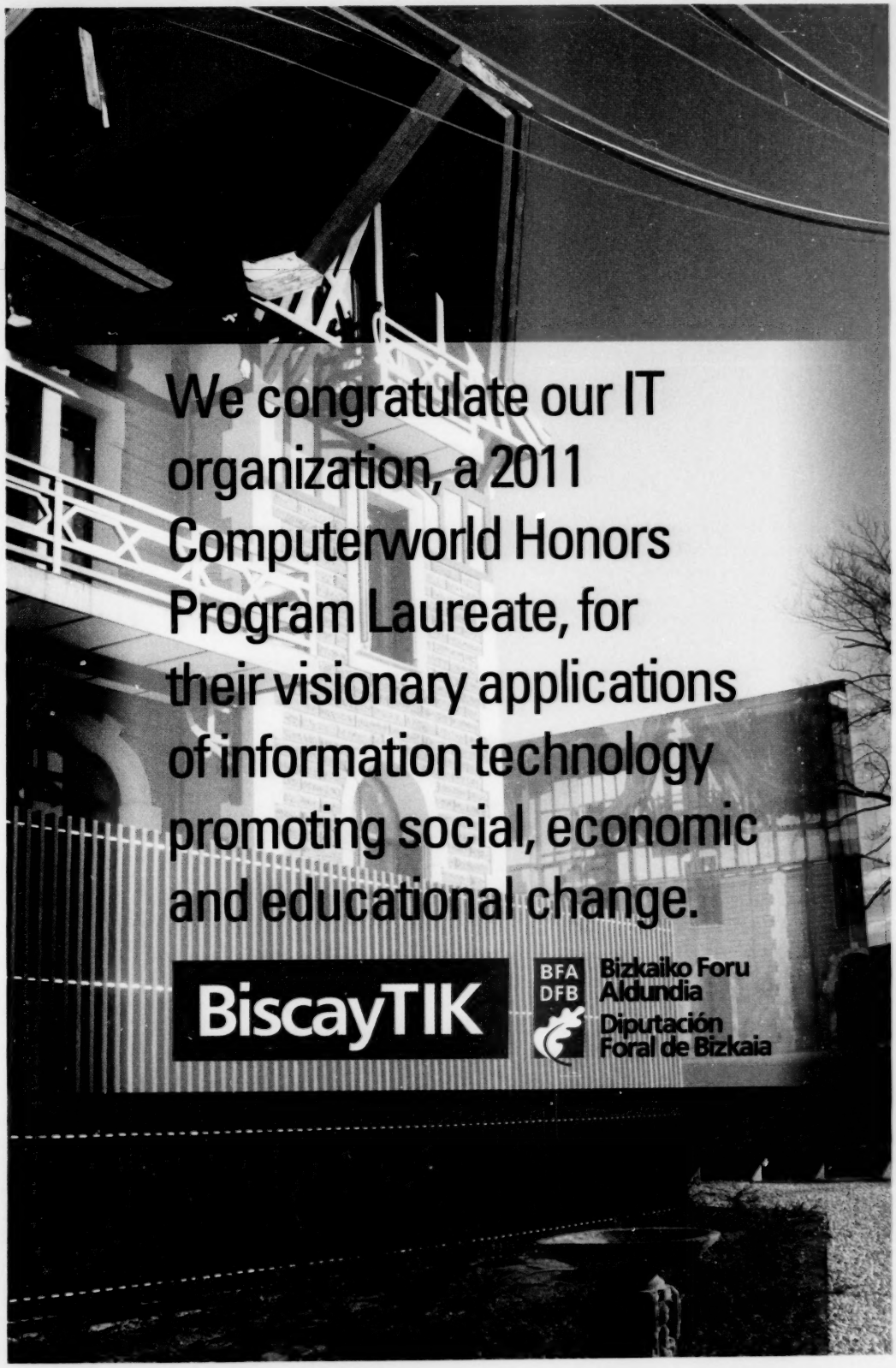
The company implemented a two-click mobile payment system from online payment provider PayPal last December. The system, called Mobile Express Checkout, eliminates the time and effort needed to input a shipping address and the payment source for a purchase, which are already securely stored with PayPal.

Crutchfield has seen a 34% increase in converting shoppers to buyers on its mobile website since implementing Mobile Express, said Todd Cabell, senior manager of e-commerce at Crutchfield.

Mobile sales are a small part of Crutchfield's online business but are "growing extremely quickly," Cabell noted. He added that 65% of the PayPal Mobile Express Checkout users had never made a purchase from Crutchfield before.

Stephen Strauss, senior manager of PayPal Mobile Solutions, said it took about two weeks to integrate Mobile Express at Crutchfield. Hundreds of companies use the tool globally, he noted, including large U.S. retailers such as Sears, Buy.com and 1-800-Flowers.com.

– MATT HAMBLEN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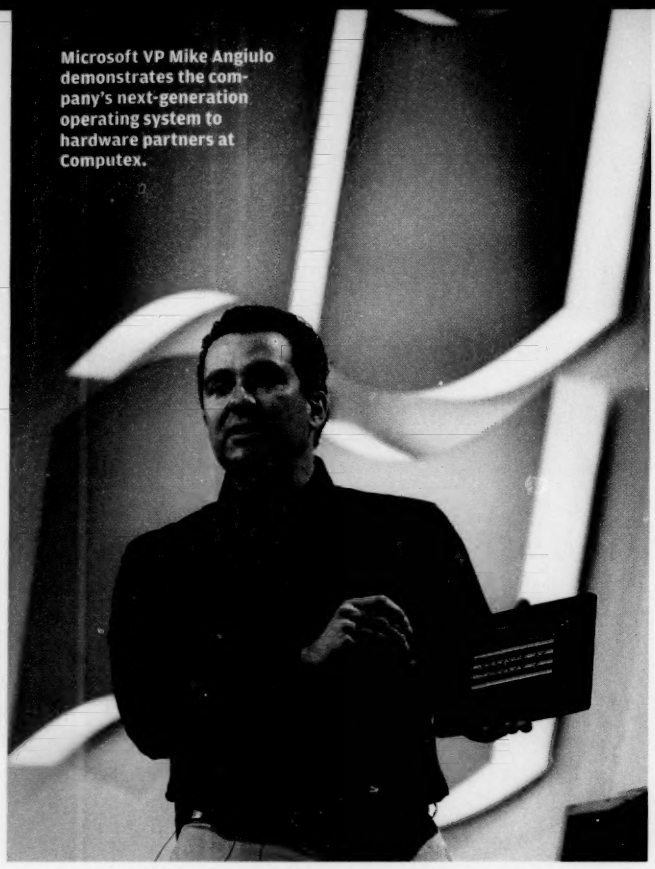


Microsoft VP Mike Angiulo demonstrates the company's next-generation operating system to hardware partners at Computex.

NEWS ANALYSIS

Microsoft Gambles With Windows 8

Analysts say the consumer focus of the next version of the operating system could turn off enterprise users. By Gregg Keizer

ANALYSTS PARSING Microsoft's recent revelations about the next generation of Windows are split on the risks posed by focusing the update on touch technology and the needs of the consumer market.

"They're betting the farm on this one," said Wes Miller, an analyst at Directions on Microsoft who was part of the vendor's Windows team from 2000 to 2004.

Miller said that Microsoft must avoid alienating the enterprise customers that drive Windows revenue. "Microsoft's problem is, how do they keep the existing customer base with Windows while addressing touch?" Miller said.

Microsoft showed off parts of the new operating system, codenamed Windows 8, earlier this month at the All Things Digital technology conference in Rancho Palos Verdes, Calif., and at the Computex trade show in Taiwan.

Windows 8 is described by Microsoft executives as a "reimagining" of its decades-old cash-cow operating system. It responds to both touch and keyboard-and-mouse navigation and can run a wide range of devices, from small tablets to large desktop systems.

Gartner analyst Michael Silver said that while Microsoft had to create a "next-generation lighter-weight OS" like Windows 8, it's likely that enterprises will initially skip the new release, just as most did with Windows Vista. Microsoft itself endorsed that tactic by recommending that businesses now deploying Windows 7 stick with their plans. Windows 8 is expected to be released sometime next year.

Windows 8 will run all traditional 32- or 64-bit software that now runs on Windows 7, though Microsoft said it will push developers to craft apps for it that use HTML5, JavaScript and other Web-standard technologies. Such a plan would lead to the development of applications that in a way ape Google's online apps.

> Until they can tell us how **legacy apps will run on Windows 8 on ARM**, I'll have to be bearish on their chances.
>
> ANALYST, IDC

At Computex, Microsoft showed a Windows 8 prototype interface that's significantly different from the desktop interface that has generated huge profits for the company for decades.

The new Windows 8 start screen includes several large, colored application icons that look similar to those on Microsoft's Windows Phone 7 mobile operating system. Tapping an icon with a finger launches an application and allows it to take up the entire screen, without the usual Windows menus, system tray and scroll bars around the edges.

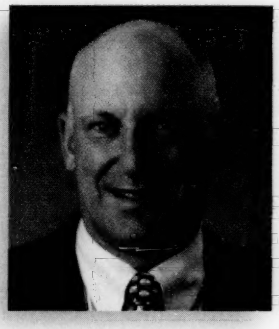
The application tiles in Windows 8 automatically display new information from the Web, such as Twitter posts, email messages and news items gathered from RSS readers, said Michael Angiulo, corporate vice president of Windows planning, hardware and ecosystem.

Many analysts are reserving their judgment on the new software, given that they still have multiple unanswered questions.

"Until they can tell us how legacy apps will run on Windows 8 on ARM, I'll have to be bearish on their chances," said IDC analyst Al Gillen, referring to the ARM processors that run many mobile devices. "So far, we don't have any idea, and it's not because we haven't asked."

"I'm more positive about this release now than I was before, but lots of questions remain," said Miller. The toughest challenge for Microsoft, he added, is simply to clearly explain its Windows 8 strategy. ◆

James Niccolai *of the IDG News Service and* **Matt Hamblen** *contributed to this story.*



Jeffrey W. Hickling

PRESIDENT AND CEO RICOH U.S

Hickling is a veteran technology management executive. He is responsible for Ricoh's direct sales and service organizations in the U.S., including Ricoh Business Solutions, IKON Office Solutions, a Ricoh company, and its dealer network. Previously, Hickling led IKON's sales, customer care and supply chain functions. He brings nearly three decades of experience in management, operations, marketing, finance and Six Sigma roles, mostly with General Electric. He has held leadership positions in a number of GE business units, including GE Supply, where he was responsible for all purchasing, logistics and information technology initiatives.

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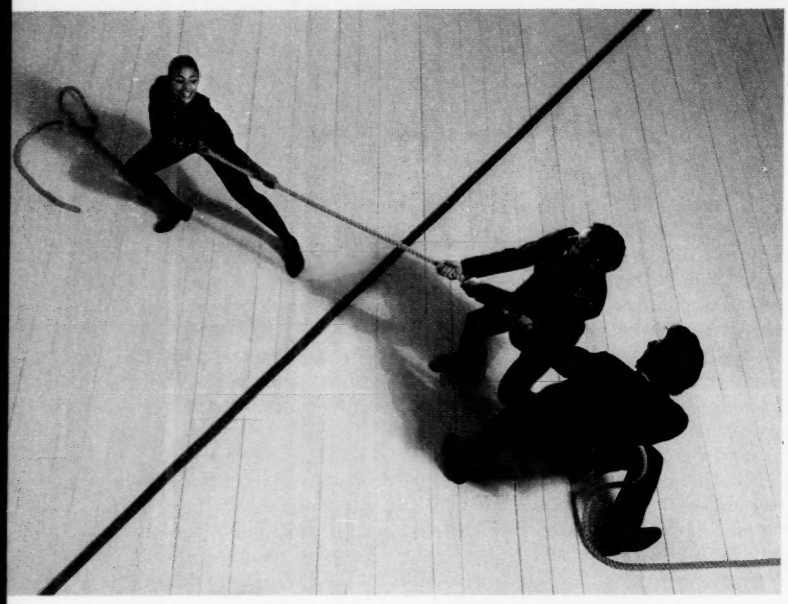
> Capturing, securing, and sharing that information formulates the basis for effective decision-making, and helps drive organizational agility.

In the State of the CIO survey, CIOs identified "Driving Business Innovation" as a key strategic goal for the next three to five years. What role will document management play in those efforts?
As we think about driving business innovation with Managed Document Services, we focus on how to improve the flow of information throughout the organization. Capturing, securing, and sharing that information formulates the basis for effective decision-making, and helps drive organizational agility. The customer needs access to the most meaningful data from each workflow.

The focus of our approach to Managed Document Services is on improving the efficiency of any business operation. We work with the customer on issues such as reducing the number of items printed, archiving the information critical to their business operations, and creating more efficient workflow processes. We want to ensure easy access to that information in the future. And also make sure we're delivering a solution that's scalable and sustainable for our customers over time.

What are some of the first steps you take with a potential customer looking to bring Managed Document Services into their organization?
The first thing we do is sit down with the customer for a rigorous process examination. We look at existing processes and focus on the change-management front. We urge the customer to take open view of the breadth of costs they're incurring around document management. There are so many other components that can get pulled into a cost assessment. Getting the customer to understand the breadth of the costs they're incurring is often part of the challenge.

Of the CIOs surveyed, 42 percent indicate they want to spend more time on "leading change efforts" in their organizations over the next three to five years. How do you see that affecting the delivery of Managed Document Services?
As we developed the value proposition for Managed Document Services, change management emerged as one of cornerstones. As you understand what is required to implement a Managed Document Services solution, you realize that without the change management component, you will not be effective. Prior to the recession, there was a wave of new technology purchases and implementations. Today, CIOs are looking to reap the promised benefits of that technology. Change efforts must focus on employee behaviors—the promise of new technology or new business processes cannot be realized if the employees don't adopt them. There is a specific process we use to drive change, and we have invested a lot in developing our capability for managing change with our customers.



HP, Microsoft Team Up Against Oracle

As its feud with Oracle continues, HP pushes Microsoft SQL Server-enabled offerings at its user conference. By Patrick Thibodeau

HEWLETT-PACKARD SAYS that more Oracle databases and applications run on its computers than on any other vendor's machines.

Nonetheless, IT executives attending HP's Discover 2011 user conference in Las Vegas earlier this month didn't find Oracle exhibiting on the show floor. And although the company's name appeared on the show program, it was for a session titled "Oracle Database Migrations to Microsoft SQL Server With HP Services."

Microsoft, meanwhile, was a major presence as HP showed off products optimized for Microsoft's SQL Server database, including the HP Business Data Warehouse Appliance and the HP Database Consolidation Solution for Microsoft SQL, which consolidates transactional databases.

The SQL Server-enabled offerings were developed as part of a $250 million HP-Microsoft product integration effort announced last year.

The Microsoft-oriented conference took place less than a year after Oracle hired former HP CEO Mark Hurd, which prompted HP to file a lawsuit against the database vendor. Hurd joined Oracle shortly after he was ousted from HP — a forced resignation that Oracle CEO Larry Ellison blamed on "cowardly corporate political correctness."

And in March, Oracle announced that it would stop supporting its products on Intel Itanium-based systems. HP, which sells the majority of Itanium-based servers, this month hinted that it may file a lawsuit unless Oracle reverses the decision.

Citing HP's clear moves to encourage users of its hardware to migrate from Oracle to Microsoft software, some IT executives at companies running Oracle software on HP systems remain skeptical of official assurances that they have nothing to worry about.

"They are speaking out of both sides of their mouths," said Allen Allison, chief security officer at NaviSite, a colocation and managed hosting provider with 12 data centers worldwide.

NaviSite runs Oracle software on HP x86 Itanium-based systems. "I think they realize that at the end of the day, as much as [HP] loves being partnered with Microsoft, they do have a significant installed base with Oracle," Allison said at the conference.

John Belliveau, a senior systems engineer at a financial services firm he asked not be identified, said he hopes to look at the HP-Microsoft data warehouse offering, particularly because of its attractive licensing plan.

But he added that it would be tough for his firm to stop using Oracle software on its HP hardware. "It's one thing to announce at a conference that you are taking [Oracle] on, but it's another thing to prove that you really belong in the same ring," Belliveau said.

Charles King, an analyst at Pund-IT, said he hopes that HP's Oracle customers needn't worry about abandonment.

"The real question to consider is how far and how deeply this schism between [Oracle and HP] goes," King said. "As an undying optimist, I hope Oracle and HP work things out, but if that proves impossible, users have numerous other options," such as replacing their hardware and/or shifting to new software.

"Migrating to an entirely new hardware and software stack is far less onerous today than it ever was in the past," King said. "HP and Oracle would be wise to keep that in mind." ◆

Chris Kanaracus *and* **Nancy Gohring** *of the IDG News Service contributed to this story.*

As an undying optimist, I hope Oracle and HP work things out, but if that proves impossible, users have numerous other options. ANALYST, PUND-IT

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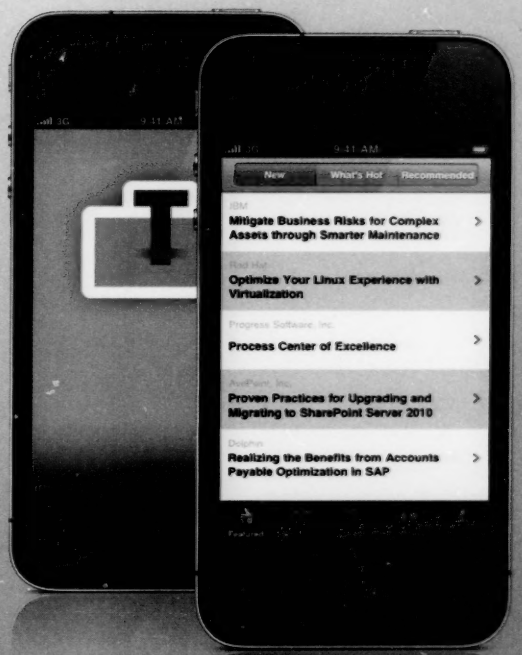
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THE Grill

Teri Takai

The Defense Department's CIO is on the front line of U.S. cybersecurity efforts.

What's the most interesting thing people don't know about you? Most people think that I am originally from California, given my previous role as CIO there. I am actually from Michigan, because my parents were relocated during World War II and settled in a small town where we were one of two Asian-American families. This drove an interesting dynamic in my overall work ethic and approach.

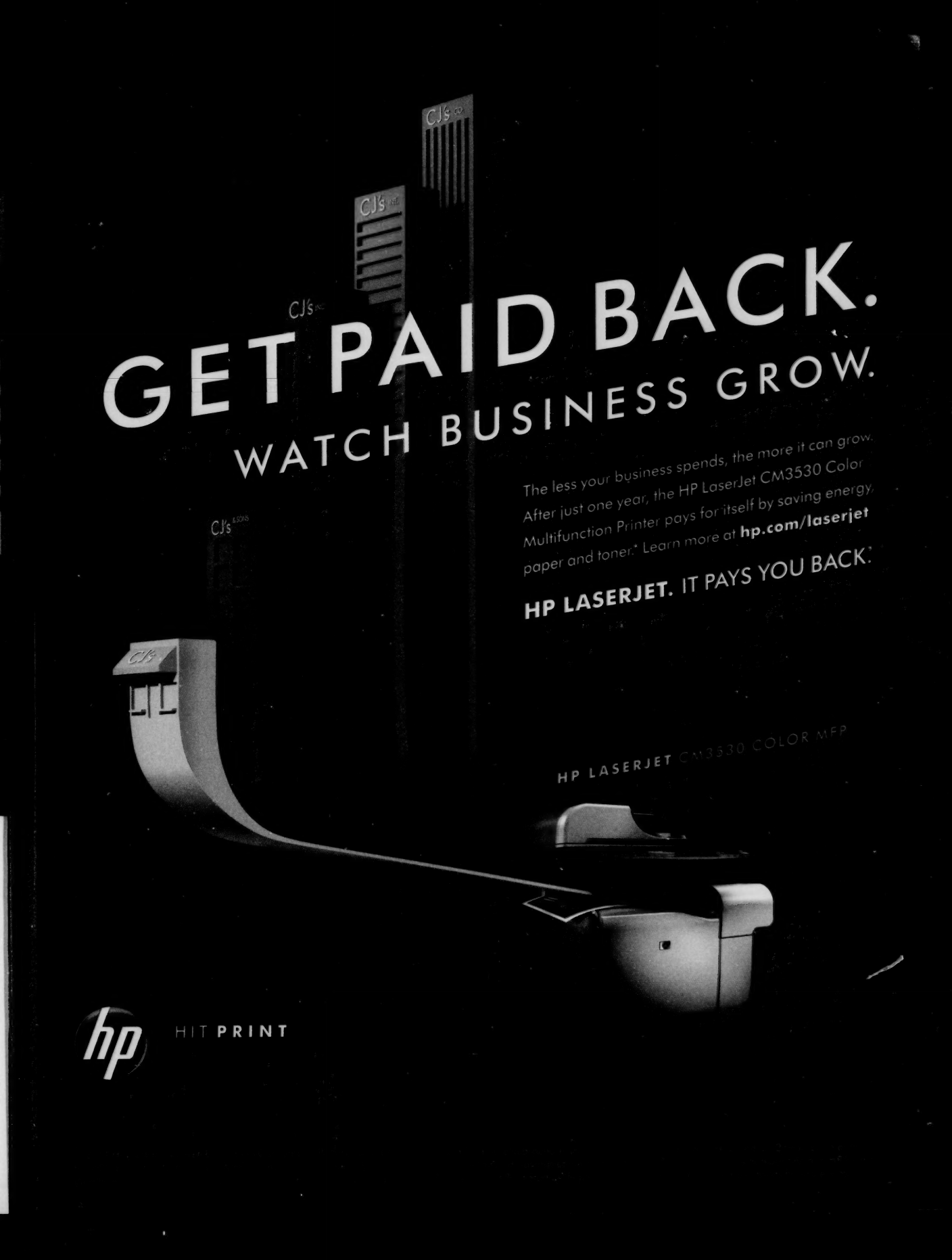
What's your favorite technology? Those that don't require much learning curve. I don't have much patience for complex technologies that are not intuitive.

Are you ever completely unplugged? No. I use my BlackBerry as my alarm clock.

THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE *had some big news on the IT front last fall. First, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates appointed Teri Takai as the department's CIO. Then he announced that Cyber Command, an organization he conceived of in 2009 to protect approximately 15,000 military computer networks, was fully operational. Takai isn't new to overseeing such monumental projects. She served as California's CIO from 2007 to 2010, and as Michigan's CIO from 2003 to 2007. Prior to that, Takai worked at Ford for 30 years. She recently talked about her laser focus on security.*

What's your relationship with Cyber Command? It's somewhat of a civilian-to-military relationship. I'm a presidential appointee, and I work for the Office of the Secretary of Defense. I have oversight of the policy related to the way we deploy our cybersecurity tools, and I have oversight over the broader-ranging policies for our entire information technology spend and how we deploy information technology. Another area I think is really important is the relationship between the Office of the Secretary of Defense, my office and CyberCom. There are instances where we can take action but that action has an implication on the policy of the Defense Department. For example, after the tsunami in Japan,

Continued on page 12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> **[Cybersecurity] is being incorporated into all the technology decisions we make, the way we look at technology.**

Continued from page 10

we experienced very high volumes of traffic where individuals inside the Pentagon were utilizing YouTube and video-sourcing sites to get information. And that was happening simultaneously where we had actual cable outages [as a result of the earthquake], so we had to shut down the ability of folks within DOD to utilize those sources because we didn't have the bandwidth.

When did cybersecurity become a major focus of national defense? Was there a tipping point? No, I don't think it's something you can say, "Wow, this was the time we recognized it was important." I think DOD has always recognized the importance of information, whether it be intelligence information or information on the ground. But as we started to deploy more of that information and became more dependent on our network, you also had the growth of the cyberattack threat — first it was independent hackers, and now very organized attacks are coming from organized groups or foreign countries. So I don't know if it was a single event or more of a reflection of the things we feel we need to do to protect ourselves, our war fighters, and recognition of how the world is changing in terms of the threats coming at us.

What are the main threats to defense networks? No. 1: We are seeing a continual escalation of attacks on our networks and attacks seeking to gain information from our networks. We have targeted attacks through a variety of means. The list is never-ending. They're trying to get to our networks and have access to information. Second: the use of social networks. We have to be concerned about the information that's being posted. For the third area, we have to be concerned about how we're using many of these tools in terms of what you see as a private citizen, like our email being exploited.

Deputy Defense Secretary William Lynn said, "The cyberthreat is still maturing. I don't think we're at the final stage of what that threat may look like." Is there something specific evolving? As a department, we are very concerned about the proliferation of cyberweapons. These are tools and weapons that are different than conventional physical weapons, where you have to have a certain size or have a certain amount of money to deploy those weapons. These weapons can be deployed by a small group of very knowledgeable people. We're now seeing those kinds of weapons in the hands of individuals who might not have had them before. The cyberthreat *is* maturing, and we have to be thinking ahead.

Lynn also called for the U.S. and NATO to adopt protections against cyberthreats, saying, "We need to be able to protect our own military networks, and we're frankly not there yet." What are the challenges in getting to where you need to be? If I just speak from the standpoint of DOD, our technology first of all is very diverse. We are obviously responsive and need to provide that IT infrastructure globally and often in places that don't have mature infrastructure, so it's the size and scope of our operation that really make it a challenge to get out and secure everything the way we'd like it to be. The second piece of it is to recognize that when we are in a conflict situation [and] operating as a coalition partner, it's not just us going in, and we need to be able to collaborate and share information with everyone in that conflict with us.

But is there ever really a "there" to get to? Our view is very definitely not. That's one of the reasons why I don't care for the term "cyberwar." One of the reasons I don't think the terminology is accurate is it implies that there's an event. This is going to be something we're going to always need to do. This is being incorporated into all the technology decisions we make, the way we look at technology — and not just our traditional IT [and] our networks, but also in terms of the communications we put into weapons, ships, planes, satellites. It's not about a "there," but how the threat is going to be evolving and how we stay one step ahead, and how cybersecurity is going to be such a part of everything we do.

— *Interview by* Computerworld *contributing writer* **Mary K. Pratt** *(marykpratt@verizon.net)*

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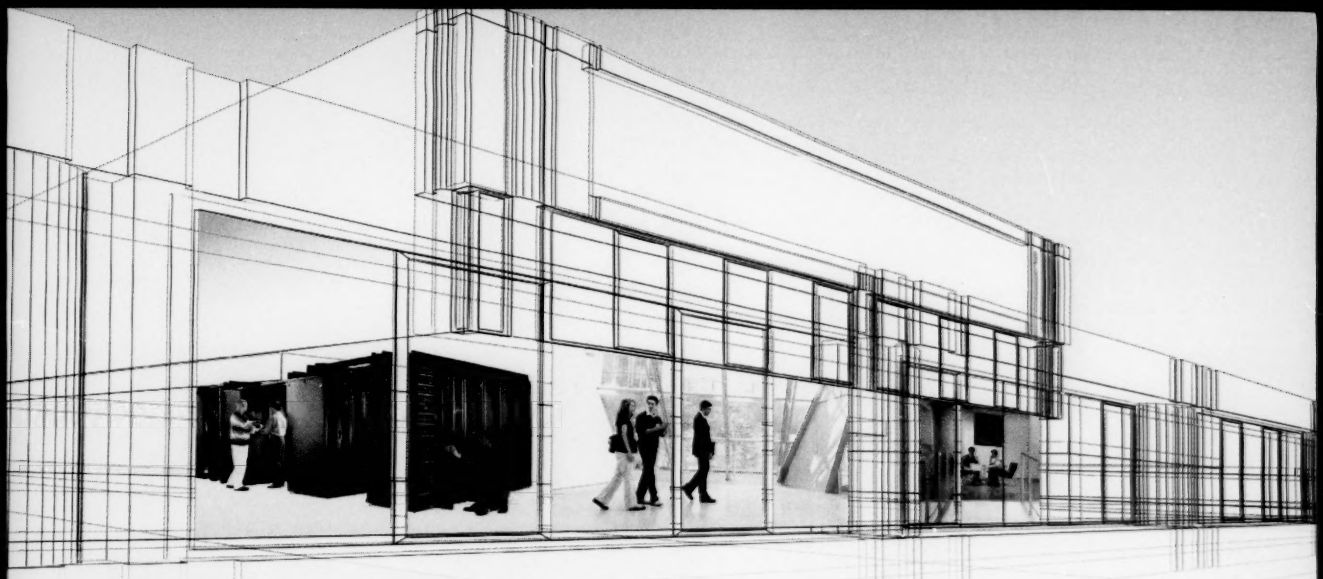

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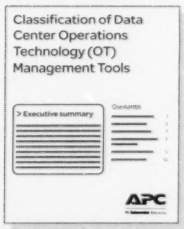

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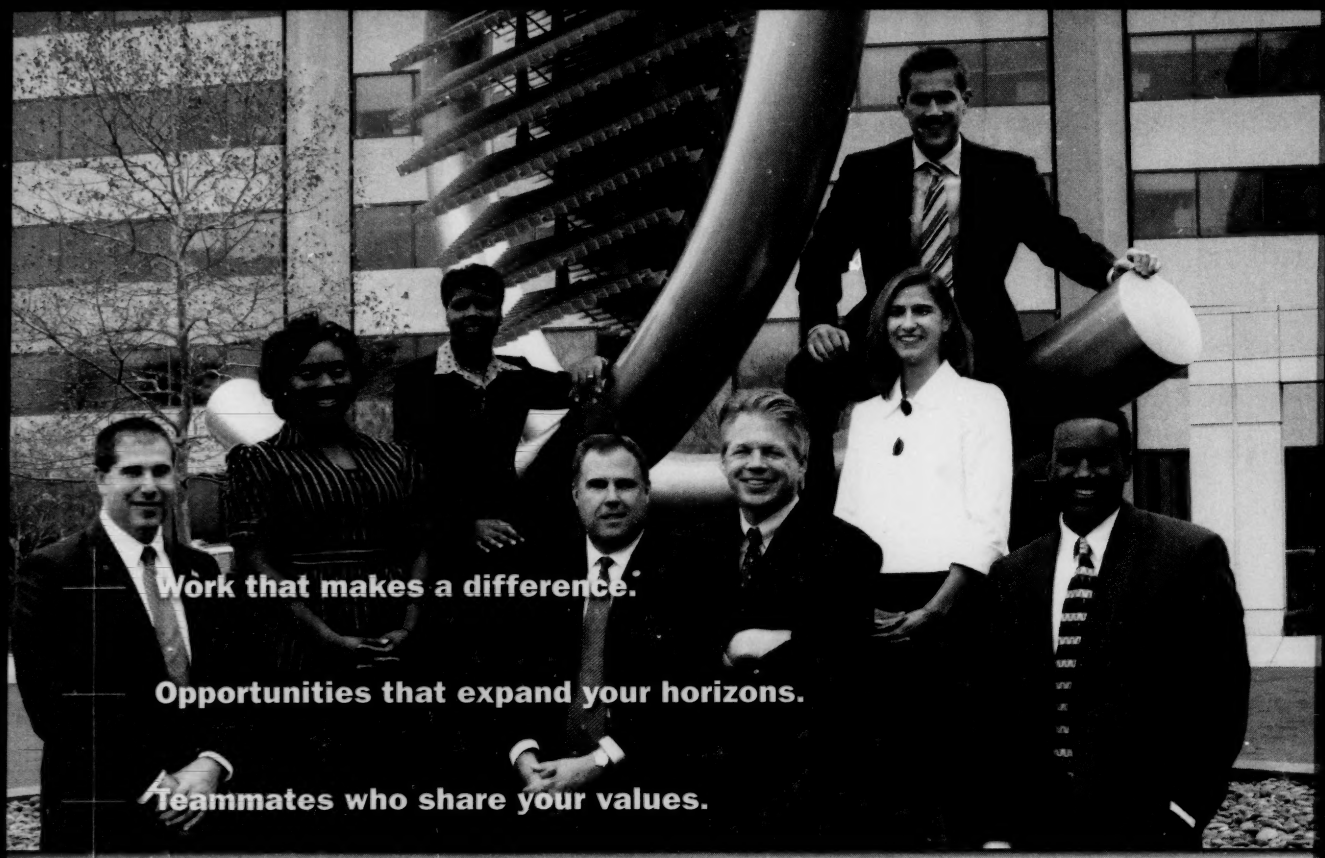

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IT team members Jackie Hewitt, Brett Lewis, Emily Barbara, CIO Greg Schwartz, Gita Woosley and Rick Eubanks

NO.

USAA

The money and benefits are extraordinary, but what IT employees seem to love most are the company's traditions of innovation and service. By Julia King

JUST HOW GREAT IS IT TO WORK AT USAA, *Computerworld*'s No. 1 Best Place to Work in IT for the second year in a row?

"Well, I don't want to make it sound like it's all candy and rainbows, but it really is pretty nice," says Brett Lewis, a lead technical architect and 23-year veteran of the San Antonio-based financial services company.

First he ticks off a long list of generous benefits, which include an annual holiday bonus equal to two weeks' base pay, health insurance subsidized at the rate of 87.5%, access to any of three state-of-the-art fitness centers on campus at minimal cost, 24 days of vacation after a year on the job, and a tuition reimbursement benefit of $10,000 annually. "What keeps me here is that you couldn't ask for a better place to work," says Lewis.

In February, each of the company's 22,500 full-time employ-

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I really believe people in this business are the most important asset. Hardware and software are important, but people is where you win the game.

GREG SCHWARTZ, CIO, USAA

ees, including 2,135 in IT, also received a whopping 18.4% performance bonus, the second highest in the company's history. The highest bonus — 18.8% — was paid out in 2010, when USAA also took the top spot on the Best Places to Work in IT list.

Yet even more exceptional than the benefits, according to Lewis and other IT staffers, is the company's overall work environment, which emphasizes innovation, collaboration and, above all else, service.

USAA's customer base comprises 8 million U.S. military members, veterans and their families around the world. And it's not at all unusual for members of USAA's workforce to express great zeal for serving this particular customer segment.

"My No. 1 favorite thing about working at USAA is being on a team that has a single goal," says Emily Bubela, a senior research engineer and self-described military brat, who joined the company eight years ago, right out of college. Growing up in a military family, the first check Bubela ever wrote was on a USAA account, and she has had car insurance with the company since she was a teenager.

"USAA has been in my DNA for a long time," she quips. Now, working at the company, "there's never a question about everybody's priorities. It's always the same. What's best for the member is the guiding principle," she says.

"We have a strong and noble mission, and we believe in it," says Jackie Head, executive director of database and storage management. Every month, one of the company's military members is profiled in a short video. "It gives us a sense of the people we serve," Head says. "It's that emotional side that keeps you very much in sync with who your customers are."

There's also an abundance of opportunities to learn about and develop expertise with the latest technologies, through company-paid outside training and certification programs or through USAA's Open Innovation Lab, which allows employees to design and test ideas before moving them to full production. Additionally, a new Member Service Representative Lab provides an isolated production environment where new ideas can be tested in a live but controlled environment. And last year, the company launched a social media networking environment known as ICE, where employees can share their ideas about products or business-process improvements, plus comment and vote on other people's suggestions.

"What we try to do is create a work environment where our people can really innovate and they can be creative and help us solve business problems," says CIO Greg Schwartz. "I really believe people in this business are the most important asset. Hardware and software are important, but people is where you win the game." ◆

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Nurturing Valued Staffers

GITA WOOSLEY has never worked anywhere other than USAA, and she doesn't foresee that changing anytime soon. As long as opportunities keep coming her way, she has no intention of leaving.

"I love what I do, and I don't see myself going anywhere else," says the 27-year-old user interface analyst.

Woosley was hired right out of college, starting as a mainframe programmer. From there, she moved to a technology vendor management role and then into her current job.

"I've been given opportunities based on my performance," she says. Most of what she knows about user interfaces, for example, she learned on the job.

"It was sink or swim, and it was a real risk, but the important thing is, I was given an opportunity," she says.

Woosley compares her broad range of experiences at USAA to those a consultant might accrue across various assignments. "I've worked with a bank, in insurance, with a dot-com, and with corporate applications, mobile and iPhones," she notes.

Perhaps the best indicator of just how much Woosley likes working at USAA is that she helped her husband, an electrical engineer, get a job at the company.

"I gave his résumé to our HR person, and he was hired within two weeks," she says.

As for the range of generous benefits USAA offers, her absolute favorite is access to three fitness centers. "I am a workout junkie. I love running, and I love boot camp," she says. "If I ever wanted to consider being employed elsewhere, finding the same benefits would be the biggest hindrance."

— JULIA KING

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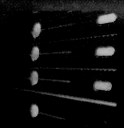

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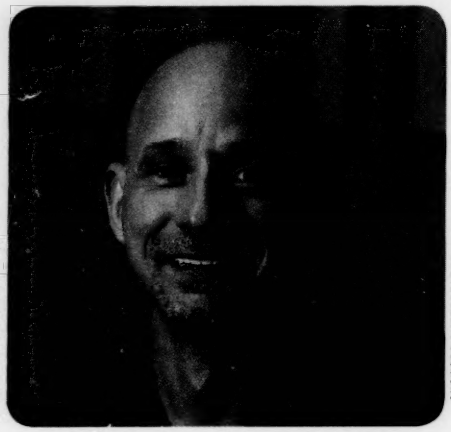
Pursuing Top Talent



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RICK EUBANKS, 42, was perfectly happy in his job as a systems integrator with AT&T when a recruiter from USAA first approached him in January 2010. Eubanks declined the overture.

Four months later, he received another call from the same recruiting manager at USAA. "Nobody had ever been that persistent," he says. This time, Eubanks accepted an invitation to interview. All told, he met with 16 people during eight interview sessions. What impressed him most, he recalls, is "the quality of the personnel and an attention to detail, which I learned in the military. I saw the same attention to detail in the interviewers."

Eubanks, a Navy veteran with a Cisco Certified Internetwork Expert certification, signed on with USAA. "It was a great fit from a cultural standpoint," he says. Indeed, the culture is his favorite thing about working at USAA.

"We strive to be the best, and that's a great thing, because I like challenges," Eubanks says. He also likes the fact that he has ready access to additional education and training, which he takes advantage of on a regular basis. "I recently went to a wireless class that was completely supported by my management. I'm also going to Cisco Live in July, which is one big training festival," he notes.

Eubanks also values USAA's commitment to work/life balance. "I enjoy working hard, but I also want time to recharge," he says. Often, he does so at a USAA event, such as its spring festival. "I'm a family man with three boys," he notes. "We'll be coming here to watch the fireworks, and after T-ball and baseball, we'll be here enjoying hot dogs."

– JULIA KING

HOW WE CHOSE THE BEST PLACES

FOR THE 18TH YEAR IN A ROW, *Computerworld* conducted a survey to identify the 100 best places to work for IT professionals. In August 2010, *Computerworld* started accepting nominations. Participants were asked to provide the name and contact information of the appropriate individual at their company who was familiar with or had access to employment statistics and financial data, as well as benefits policies and programs for the IT department and company.

In January 2011, each contact at more than 500 nominated companies received a 75-question survey asking about their organization's average salary and bonus increases, percentage of IT staff promoted, IT staff turnover rates, training and development, and the percentage of women and minorities in IT staff and management positions. In addition, information was collected on retention programs, how each organization rewards outstanding performance, and benefits such as flextime, and reimbursement for college tuition and technology certifications. Information from those surveys was used in compiling the 100 company profiles on the following pages.

Upon completion of the company survey, participants were emailed instructions on selecting a random sample of their U.S.-based full- and part-time IT staffs. All participating companies were required to obtain feedback from their employees. The responses to the employee survey went directly to a third-party research company.

Topics covered in the survey included satisfaction with training and development programs, compensation, benefits and work/life balance. In addition, employees were asked to rate morale in their IT departments, the importance of various benefits, and their agreement with a variety of statements, from career growth to management's fair and equal treatment of employees.

A total of 29,308 IT employees responded to the employee survey from the final 100 companies selected. The nomination survey, company survey and employee survey were all conducted via the Internet. The company and employee survey portions of the research ended in March 2011. To qualify to complete the company survey, participating companies had to employ a minimum of 50 IT employees. Companies based outside the U.S. had to employ a minimum of 300 total employees at a U.S. headquarters and a minimum of 50 IT employees in the U.S., with at least 50% of their total number of IT employees based in the U.S.

In scoring the responses from the company and employee surveys, company results were weighted based on employees' importance ratings from the employee component. Approximately half of the total scoring was based on employee responses, with the remaining half based on the survey of the company's benefits and other programs.

This year's survey process was managed by Michele Peoples of IDG Research.

– Ellen Fanning and Mari Keefe,
Best Places program coordinators

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TOP-TEAM SPOTLIGHT:

Emily Bubela

» *USAA's Senior Research Engineer*

EMILY BUBELA, who grew up in a military family that banked with and was insured by USAA, also chose USAA as her first – and so far only – employer after graduating with an MIS degree from Texas A&M University.

Bubela had an internship with USAA between her junior and senior years in college, when she worked on USAA.com, doing advanced Java development. Today, she works in applied research.

"Our job is to research and apply new technologies, to discover which new technology is a good fit for us and how we might use it," she says.

Bubela says she especially appreciates the democratic nature of innovation at USAA. Using an online network known as ICE, employees can present their ideas to the entire company, she explains. "We monitor ideas that are submitted and discover how we can apply technology to make them happen or make them better," says Bubela.

She's also grateful for the opportunity to work on projects across various businesses at USAA.

"One of my favorite things here is that the IT shop is so large, you have the opportunity to do whatever you want to do," she says. "I'm a classic case. When I first started, I did programming, but it didn't take me long to discover that coding all day is not what I enjoy. I like interacting with customers and designing applications. That's where my passion is. I've been able to take my career there, and it has been wonderful."

– JULIA KING

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TOP-TEAM SPOTLIGHT:

Jackie Head

» *USAA's Executive Director, Database and Storage Management*

JACKIE HEAD was 30 years old when she went back to college to earn a degree in information systems from the University of Texas at San Antonio. After completing an internship with USAA her senior year, she joined the company as a full-time employee and has been on the fast track ever since.

"There is such opportunity for growth here," says Head, who started out as a systems programmer, moved quickly into a team lead role, and within three years was promoted to the management team in the desktop area of the IT group. From there, she has rotated through leadership roles in systems management, infrastructure, databases and storage.

"It has been phenomenal for me every time I move to a new assignment," says Head, now 48. When she moved into a mainframe role, for example, she had no background in the technology. "I couldn't have been further afield of my comfort zone," Head says. Yet she learned. She says she also got plenty of support from her employer.

"USAA puts a lot of focus on training leaders and succession planning, so I have had a huge opportunity to train through leadership conferences," she notes.

Head also appreciates the fact that she has had opportunities to give back.

"For the past six years, I've been participating in our college recruiting program," she says. "I feel honored to do that and to bring in young talent and help develop that."

– JULIA KING

TOP-TEAM SPOTLIGHT:

Brett Lewis

» *USAA's Lead Technical Architect*

BRETT LEWIS, lead technical architect, joined USAA 23 years ago as a computer programmer. What attracted him to the company was its state-of-the-art IT. A San Antonio native, he had moved back to the city from Michigan for family reasons. But he didn't want to lose the cutting-edge skills he had acquired while working in Michigan.

"I knew about USAA just because of living in the community before. I also knew their computer systems were up to date and advanced," he recalls.

Now, more than two decades later, Lewis continues to acquire the latest technology skills in his architect role. On a day-to-day basis, his work revolves around research and innovation, conducting design reviews and building technology road maps.

"My role is to assess what is happening in the industry and to do a competitive analysis of what's happening in the industry with the technology we use, our software development tools, languages and other capabilities," he explains. "The work is challenging; there's always a new design to be made or a challenge to overcome. And technology-wise, it's great. Every day I come in, I have to keep reminding myself how spoiled we are."

SNOWPRO PHOTOGRAPHY

Lewis' most recent challenge is working on the IT architecture to support mobile banking applications. "Mobile is an extremely important technology at USAA because our members are mobile and they prefer mobile," he says.

There are also ample opportunities to learn as much as you want about new technologies, Lewis adds.

"The organized training the company offers is incredible. We have internal and external classes, and they bring in outside consultants to train on hot topics," he notes. One example: "Five gurus came in last year to talk to us about HTML5 and help us get up to speed on a new and emerging technology."

All in all, USAA offers "a lot of varied sources to stay on top of technology," Lewis says. "That's a daily occurrence for me. I'm always trying to pick up new skills."

— JULIA KING

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INDIANA UNIVERSITY
COMPUTERWORLD 100 BEST PLACES TO WORK IN IT 2011

NO.

Securian Financial Group

It gets pay and perks right, and ices the cake with promotions and recognition.

IT team members

Application manager Michael Yee says there's not any one factor that has kept him at Securian Financial Group Inc. for the past 21 years. Rather, he says, there's the St. Paul, Minn., company's commitment to a range of fundamentals that, taken all together, create a great IT shop.

"It's just a nice place to work, nice people. It feels like family," Yee says.

He points to the financial services firm's commitment to developing its own staff. Yee started out as a programmer and in that role was able to move through a half-dozen different positions.

Similarly, systems engineer Jeff Deaver says he likes the fact that the company is willing to be on the forefront of technology, which keeps him and other IT workers challenged.

"There is rarely a day where I'm just sitting at my desk, and it's probably true for the majority of people," Deaver says.

– **Pratt** *is a Computerworld contributing writer in Waltham, Mass. Contact her at marykpratt@verizon.net.*

3 General Mills Inc.

No. 1 for benefits, No. 7 for training

IT employees at this Minneapolis-based food giant have spoken: What's best about working here is the flexibility. In fact, in a recent internal survey, 61% of IT employees said work flexibility was an important factor in their decision to join General Mills, and 88% said it's been an important factor in their decision to stay. Options for flexible work arrangements include telecommuting, flextime, part-time schedules, job-sharing setups, sabbaticals and summer hours.

4 Genentech Inc.

No. 3 for benefits, No. 2 for diversity

A sense of mission and a role in efforts to improve the lives of patients is what IT workers say make this South San Francisco-based biotechnology company a great place to work. Each year, the IT organization spends two days off-campus at the "Full Spectrum IT" event, where the group meets face to face with patients who have benefited from the medications Genentech develops for people with difficult-to-treat diseases.

5 Verizon Wireless

No. 2 for training

The IT team at this Basking Ridge, N.J., telecommunications company recently helped launch the VZW 4G LTE network, after more than 69,000 hours of IT development work that affected about 80% of the IT systems. Top-notch training makes it happen: Employees have access to online training, instructor-led courses and $8,000 in annual tuition assistance.

6 University of Pennsylvania

No. 2 for benefits, No. 4 for diversity

This Ivy League university in Philadelphia offers a slew of work/family support programs: discounted services, flex schedules, snow-day services, lunchtime lectures, career support and more. The IT team is actively encouraged to take advantage of the school's employee tuition benefits. Employees enjoy free admission to Penn's Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology and the Institute of Contemporary Art.

7 Chesapeake Energy Corp.

No. 2 for retention

IT at this oil and gas exploration and production company in Oklahoma City is viewed as a core need – not a cost center. IT staffers get their hands on first-class technologies. Plus, Chesapeake's 72,000-square-foot fitness center is a favorite employee perk, offering two complete cardio rooms, a swimming pool and a 25-foot rock-climbing wall.

8 Salesforce.com Inc.

No. 5 for training, No. 7 for retention

IT staffers at this San Francisco-based provider of hosted customer relationship management software have the freedom to set their own schedules. The team uses the agile scrum methodology, where each member can determine how and when to complete his work. All employees get paid time off to volunteer in their communities – building housing, setting up IT infrastructures for schools or sorting toys for children's charities, for example.

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9 Booz Allen Hamilton Inc.

No. 8 for training, No. 4 for benefits

The 300-plus members of the IT team at this global consulting firm based in McLean, Va., take their commitment to community service seriously. Employees devote hundreds of volunteer hours each year to causes they're passionate about. Many IT team members are deeply involved in two IT-led community partnerships: the Embry Rucker Community Shelter in Reston, Va., and the D.C. College Success Foundation.

10 Quicken Loans Inc.

No. 3 for retention

Training is king at this online mortgage lender in Detroit. Employees receive more than 40 hours of training each year on subjects directly related to their areas of expertise, and they benefit from several other formal and informal training programs. Each employee receives 200 hours of training annually, on average.

11 American Fidelity Assurance Co.

IT promotions: 5%

IT projects that support corporate goals and are cost-justified are approved by a cross-divisional and multidisciplinary group at this Oklahoma City-based health and insurance company. This process lets IT manage resources effectively and ensures that efforts are expended in the right areas.

12 Bank of America Corp.

No. 7 for benefits

IT employees at this financial services firm in Charlotte, N.C., get involved in cutting-edge projects. Among them are an electronic trading platform, a new system that offers investors broad electronic access to the bank's products and services, and new Deposit Image ATMs, which allow customers to make deposits without slips or envelopes and receive on-screen verification with check images.

14 SAS Institute Inc.

No. 4 for retention

This Cary, N.C.-based software company's international presence appeals to its employees. SAS hosts annual global workshops at its U.S. headquarters, where its U.S. IT staffers get to meet the international IT people they've worked with remotely. The company delivered more global IT projects in the past year than at any other time in its history.

NO.

Sempra Energy

IT leads the way with digital technology and renewable energy projects.

Sempra Energy employees

Technology has gained a new prominence at Sempra Energy in San Diego. IT is now being recognized by the business as a partner, says Reed Roadman, infrastructure technology manager and a 10-year veteran at the company. No longer considered simply the keeper of back-end payroll accounting systems, Sempra's IT department is playing a key role as the utility industry moves toward smart-grid digital technology and the use of renewable energy resources. "We are on the forefront of technology for the first time, as opposed to trailers," Roadman says.

And Sempra is growing its IT team. Roadman has open positions for server and storage administrator roles, and software development positions are often available as well.

"The culture here is about caring for employees," Roadman says. "We look at employee development and encourage rotation through departments, and I think employees appreciate that."

— **Collett** *is a* Computerworld *contributing writer. You can contact her at stcollett@aol.com.*

15 National Information Solutions Cooperative

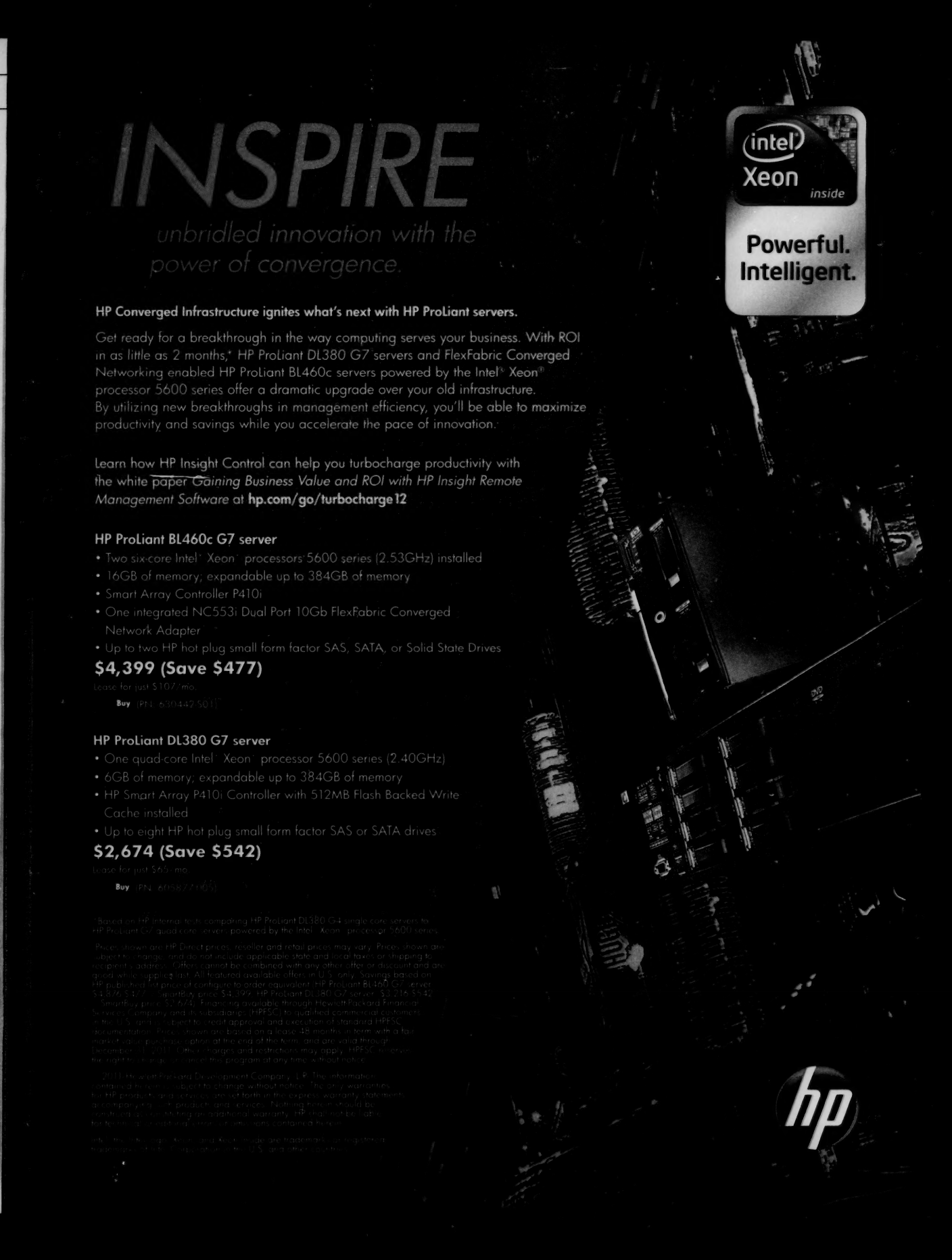
No. 1 for career development, No. 5 for retention, No. 6 for training

Employees at this data-processing and billing service in Lake Saint Louis, Mo., keep it close and comfortable, enjoying a casual dress code year-round, and collaborating on projects and getting to know one another better through meetings, internal forums, and numerous social and family events throughout the year.

16 Kaiser Permanente

No. 1 for diversity

Last year, this health maintenance organization in Oakland, Calif., launched the comprehensive "Healthy Workforce" wellness program, designed to support employee health, wellness and work/life balance. One of its key offerings is an eight-week physical activity program and cross-country virtual journey called Thrive Across America. Nearly 400 IT employees collectively lost 1,500 pounds during the concurrent CIO Challenge.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17 Prudential Financial Inc.

Women in IT: 35%
Minorities in IT: 31%

At this Newark, N.J.-based life insurer, more than 70% of IT employees telecommute, work part time or have compressed workweeks. The IT organization leads the way in making these flexible work arrangements happen, by developing new BlackBerry applications and supporting iPad, iPhone and Android mobile devices so employees can access their Prudential email and calendars anywhere.

18 Southern Co.

IT turnover: 4%
IT promotions: 8%

Communication keeps the wheels turning at this Atlanta-based energy firm. CIO Becky Blalock and her leadership team hold weekly conference calls and monthly meetings in person or by videoconference. Following each meeting, notes are shared with all IT employees. On the company's social networking tool, Yammer, IT's employee council created the Shout IT group, where employees are recognized by co-workers for going above and beyond their regular duties.

19 Texas Health Resources Inc.

No. 6 for retention, No. 6 for career development

It's all about balance at this nonprofit healthcare system in Arlington, Texas. IT employees are able to achieve work/life balance by creating flexible schedules, teleworking, using the employee assistance program, and taking paid time off to volunteer in their communities. To support teleworking, the IT group has embraced the guiding principles that virtual teams will be the norm and that they will conduct meetings virtually when possible.

20 Lehigh Valley Health Network

No. 7 for career development

Employees learn how to grow their careers at this health services group in Allentown, Pa. The IT department's internal promotions have hit double-digit percentages for many years. The philosophy is to bring in most new hires at lower-level positions and allow them to develop within the culture while current staffers are groomed for new and bigger opportunities. Of the 35 managers currently in the IT department, 27 started in nonmanagement posts and worked their way up through the ranks.

NO.

Medtronic Inc.

A connection to the company's mission gives its IT employees a sense of purpose.

Medtronic's world headquarters

Medtronic may be the word's largest medical technology company, but it's a business with a heart. Zeeshan Tariq, director of global IT program and project management, joined Medtronic after moving from Silicon Valley to Minnesota in 1999. He planned on staying for two years but says he "fell in love with the company. [Medtronic] is an organization where people truly are connected with the mission" of contributing to human welfare.

Nowhere is that connection felt more strongly than with the beneficiaries of Medtronic technology. The Minneapolis-based company hosts an annual holiday event in which patients share stories about how Medtronic has impacted their lives, giving employees a sense of the significance of their work to their clients.

"It's almost like a family away from your family," says Tariq. "[Medtronic makes] you feel connected to this greater purpose of helping people improve their lives."

21 OhioHealth

No. 9 for benefits

IT employees at this regional healthcare system in Columbus have a chance to work with the latest mobile communications and telemedicine technologies. The IT team manages ORBMobile, an application that provides physicians with lab, imaging and other clinical results on their smartphones, and a Stroke Network that links physicians and nurses in rural hospitals with critical-care nurses and neurologists in Columbus for timely diagnosis and treatment.

22 Palmetto Health

Women in IT: 48%
Minorities in IT: 21%

Money talks at this not-for-profit healthcare system in Columbia, S.C., where IT staffers are rewarded for their hard work through pay increases and promotions. Within the past year, the IT department has promoted 11 employees. The company also has several nontraditional employee recognition initiatives. For example, company leaders acknowledge employees' outstanding performances with handwritten thank-you notes.

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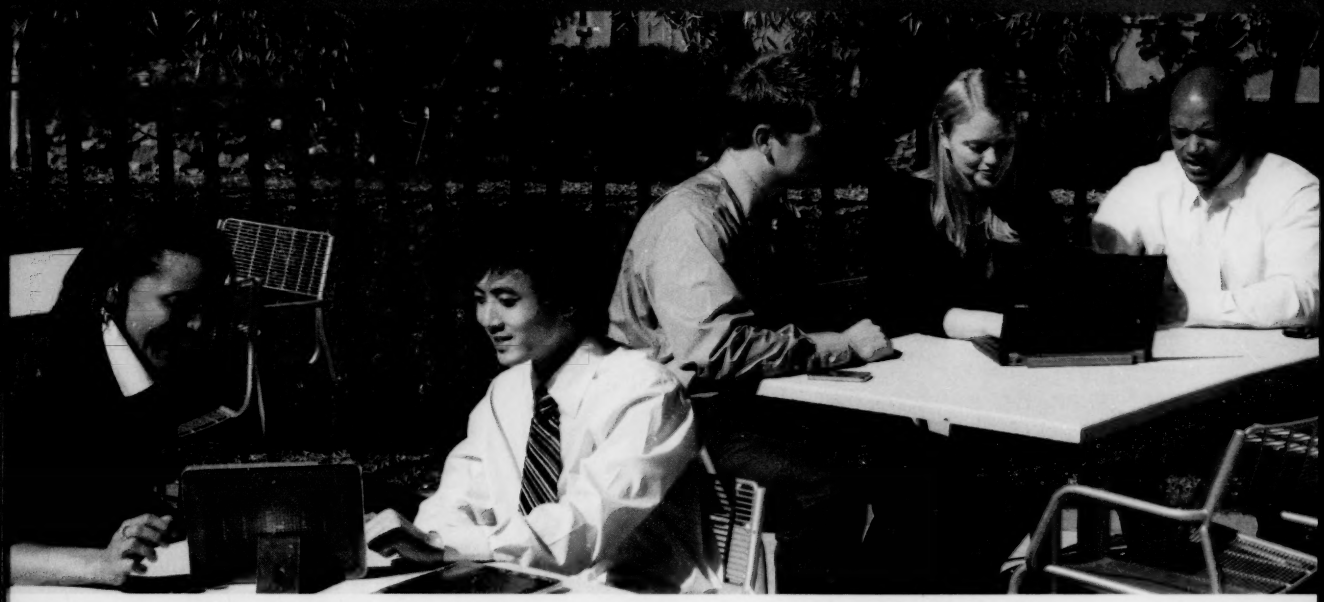

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NO.

Cedars-Sinai Medical Center

With projects queueing up and hiring on the rise, there's never a dull moment.

IT team members

A healthy sense of mission, and a democratic management style: That's what makes Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles a special place for database administrator Dawn Faircloth. "People here are given the opportunity to take part in the decision-making process," she says.

"We are a consensus-driven culture," says Darren Dworkin, senior vice president and CIO. "A lot of our focus is around getting employees more involved in decisions that affect their work." Cedars-Sinai recognizes that IT initiatives directly contribute to the quality of patient care. "Of all of the places I've worked, Cedars has the strongest sense of organizational mission," Dworkin says.

Although IT is working on a "spectacular array" of projects right now, including providing access to the electronic medical records system via mobile devices such as iPhones and iPads, Dworkin says striving to accommodate every new request is part of the IT culture. The pace can be hectic, he says, but the work is rewarding. "I don't think there's anyone who's worried about getting bored here."

25 CME Group Inc.

No. 2 for career development

At this Chicago-based company, which owns the Chicago Mercantile Exchange and the Chicago Board of Trade, a cross-section of IT employees came together recently to plan and execute the company's first internal technology fair. A similar group of IT employees launched the company's first-ever technology career fair. A formal work/life balance committee has developed plans for improving work schedule flexibility.

26 Sacramento Municipal Utility District

No. 5 for benefits

SMUD is one of the largest locally owned electric utilities in the U.S., and its IT employees are working on state-of-the-art energy-efficiency and renewable-energy initiatives. The utility was recently awarded a $128 million Department of Energy smart grid stimulus grant, which will help pay for its $300 million smart grid project.

27 Cerner Corp.

Training days for IT: 10

Training IT employees is key to the success of this North Kansas City, Mo.-based provider of clinical and administrative IT systems to the healthcare industry. It has a promote-from-within philosophy and offers separate technical and managerial career tracks. Cerner also reimburses employees for external training, including work toward certifications.

28 Caesars Entertainment Corp.

No. 6 for diversity

This Las Vegas-based gaming company, the biggest in the world, knows how to talk the talk. Its workforce communication initiatives include one-on-one meetings between employees and their managers, team meetings, roundtable discussions, and town hall meetings hosted by the senior leadership team. In late 2010, Caesars introduced a wellness program through which employees can receive discounts on insurance premiums by taking preventive health measures.

29 The Vanguard Group Inc.

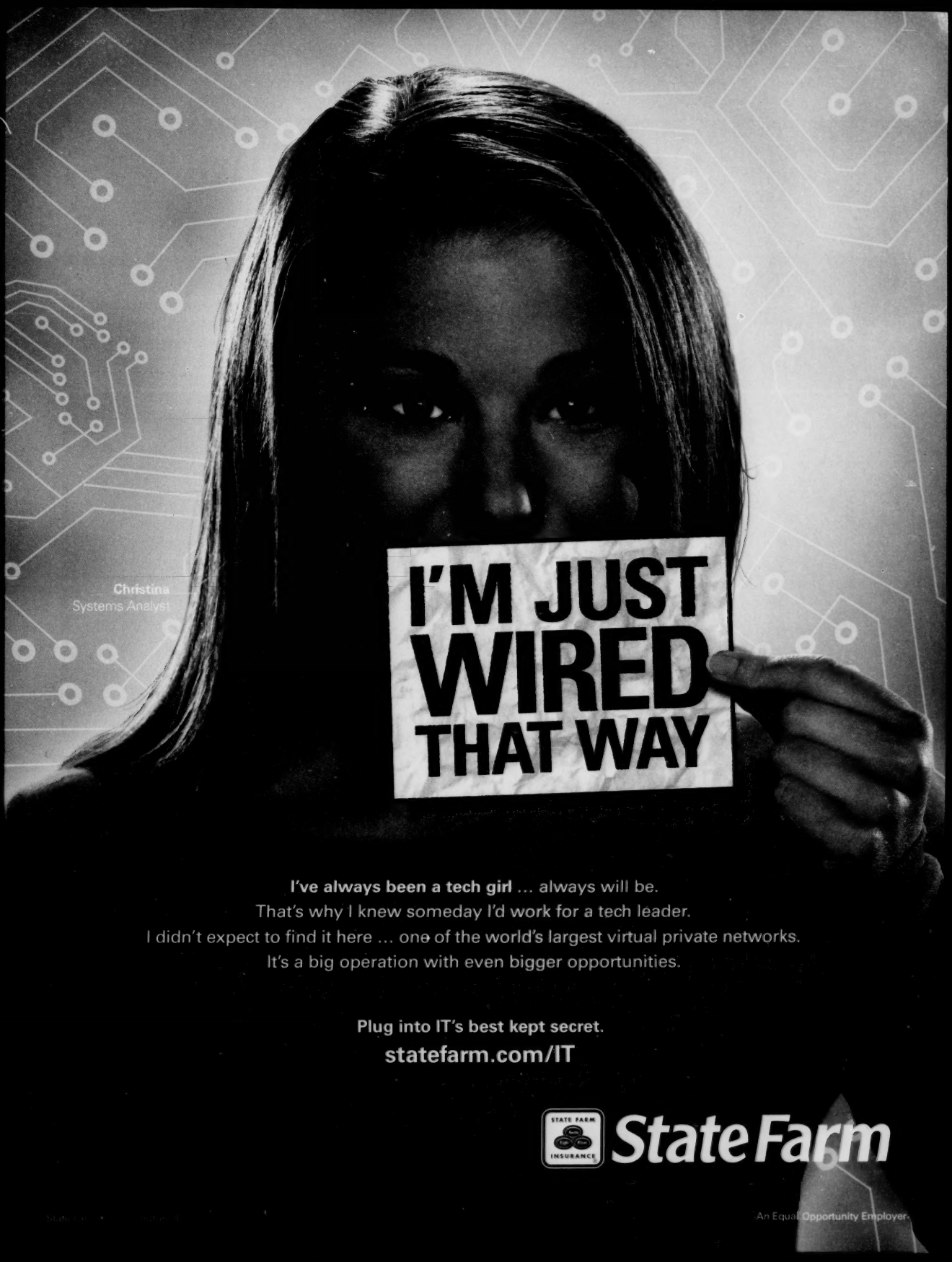
Women in IT: 29%
Minorities in IT: 30%

This Malvern, Pa.-based investment firm keeps the best projects for its IT staffers. Large custom development initiatives account for about 80% of Vanguard's development budget, and they are completed in-house, giving IT workers an opportunity to engage in hands-on development work. The IT department also offers formal job-rotation and mentoring programs, as well as personalized development plans.

30 Heartland Payment Systems Inc.

Women in IT: 24%

IT staffers at this Princeton, N.J.-based payments processor, which handles credit-, debit- and prepaid-card transactions, are always learning. The company offers education opportunities on-site at the Heartland Service Center, with classes provided by Ivy Tech, the nation's largest community college system.



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OCLC Online Computer Library Center Inc.

IT staffers are charged up by the chance to experiment and innovate.

IT staffers

Senior software engineer Lonesha Akaaba has found a professional home at the nonprofit OCLC Online Computer Library Center in Dublin, Ohio. "The biggest reason I came here is because they let you stretch your programming legs. You're free to research different ways to accomplish whatever the task is," she says.

Like some of her colleagues, Akaaba says she also values the organization's work/life balance programs and good benefits. But they also say that what makes their IT department really shine is the chance to focus on technology.

Phil Norman, director of end-user and delivery services development, says the constant stream of new challenges keeps the IT staff engaged. He points out that there's also an innovation lab, where developers have an opportunity to work on projects outside their regular activities.

"Challenge is definitely something that's here. It's invigorating," says technical director Kannan Seshadri. "I can keep bragging about the work I do all day long."

31 Principal Financial Group Inc.

IT turnover: 7%
IT promotions: 9%

IT employees at this Des Moines-based financial services provider get the job that interests them most. They can request specific project work within their current teams or use the company's high-performer rotation or job-posting programs to transfer to another IT team. The company also offers a host of scheduling options, including flextime, time off for volunteer work, and working caregiver leave. A telecommuting program allows employees to work away from the office for all or part of a day or week on a regular basis or as needed.

32 HCA Inc.

No. 8 for retention

This Nashville-based for-profit hospital operator, the largest in the U.S., knows that career development isn't a one-size-fits-all endeavor. IT employees are offered a wide array of training programs, many of which are in the company's online catalog of more than 1,500 courses. These courses, delivered in a variety of formats – including in-person instructor-led classes, Web-based training and self-study modules – focus on cultural, behavioral and managerial subject matter as well as technical topics. The IT department has also launched a new career development initiative called the Emerging Leaders Program, which prepares high-potential employees for future roles.

34 Altria Group Inc.

No. 4 for career development

IT workers at this Richmond, Va.-based tobacco company like challenges. In fact, the IT team recently received the RichTech Technology Builder Award for providing clients with IT systems that drive business or operational efficiencies. RichTech is a local IT professional organization that promotes central Virginia as a technology center. Altria's major IT initiatives include relocating the company's data center to a state-of-the-art green facility, delivering new Web-based sales systems to support the field salesforce and optimizing manufacturing systems.

35 Discover Financial Services

No. 9 for retention

This Riverwoods, Ill.-based financial services firm emphasizes work/life balance. The company has successfully implemented a "hoteling" telework program. While working remotely, employees communicate with co-workers and customers through instant messaging, collaboration software and IP-enabled phones. Twenty-eight percent of IT employees currently participate in the program. At Discover's headquarters, employees enjoy an 80-acre campus with a 1.7-mile running trail and outdoor basketball and volleyball courts.

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NO.

Grant Thornton LLP

Employees get thanks for their hard work and national exposure for their expertise.

IT staffers

The mantra among IT staffers at Grant Thornton is "work hard, play hard." Whether it's a Nerf gun battle on one of the floors at its IT headquarters in Chicago, or "Cake Wars," where divisions try to outdo one another with elaborately decorated cakes after quarterly meetings, the nearly 200 IT employees foster an energetic and supportive work environment.

"Leadership goes out of their way to make sure we all feel appreciated and recognized for a job well done," says Dana Lyons, an IT administrative assistant.

On the career development front, Grant Thornton believes in opportunities for companywide exposure and promotion. For instance, the IT support group has groomed 15 subject matter expert teams to help resolve issues throughout the company.

"You are given so many opportunities here," says Melissa Hunt, director of technology support in the Dallas office. "If you want to be involved, just raise your hand!"

36 Qualcomm Inc.

Training days for IT: 5

IT staffers at this San Diego-based wireless communications vendor are very much a part of a larger team. They offer input and testing services to help product developers, and they join project teams to help colleagues work out tough challenges. Two "all-hands" meetings are held each year to keep staffers up to date.

38 Marriott International Inc.

This Bethesda, Md.-based hotelier puts a spotlight on its exceptional employees. Each year, a select few are presented with the J. Willard Marriott Award of Excellence, which honors individuals who consistently exceed expectations, lead by example and enhance the lives of co-workers, customers and neighbors.

39 DTE Energy Co.

IT turnover: 4%
IT promotions: 8%

IT employees at this Detroit-based natural gas and electric utility have reason to feel confident about their future finances: The company offers a cash balance pension in addition to matching a percentage of employees' 401(k) contributions. The Alex Dow Award recognizes outstanding achievements related to the company's operation, and the Sarah Sheridan Award recognizes outstanding customer service.

40 Corning Inc.

No. 3 for career development

Diversity is important to this Corning, N.Y.-based maker of specialty glass and ceramics. Corning employees are diverse not only in terms of gender, ethnicity and race, but also in terms of age, sexual orientation, work styles, perspective, education and skills. Employees may join company-supported affinity groups, which help to identify organizational barriers and make positive changes to create a more inclusive culture.

41 Southern California Edison

Women in IT: 33%
Minorities in IT: 62%

IT employees at this Rosemead, Calif.-based utility are good at giving back. Southern California Edison encourages employees to use an online tool to record the number of hours they spend doing volunteer work, and each year, the utility matches the hours volunteered with cash donations of as much as $600 to a nonprofit or school of the employee's choice. The utility also sponsors an annual Employee Contributions Campaign. Last year, IT staffers gave more than $370,000 through donations and fundraisers.

42 Intuit Inc.

IT turnover: 7%
IT promotions: 11%

The IT function is embedded within the business units at this Mountain View, Calif.-based maker of TurboTax and other financial software products. In fact, IT employees have dual reporting relationships with both the CIO and general managers to enhance strategic planning and to ensure business-technology alignment. Each year, Intuit invests 12% of its revenue in new technologies.

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43 American Water

Training days for IT: 5

Technology advancements are ongoing at this water and wastewater utility in Voorhees, N.J. In 2010, American Water virtualized 28% of its server environment and completed six proof-of-concept exercises, including tests of click-to-call technology, SharePoint 2010, a telepresence system and cloud storage.

44 Scottrade Financial Services Inc.

Minorities in IT: 22%

IT employees at this St. Louis-based online brokerage are in the know. They stay up to date on the latest changes in their department and the company as a whole through CIO Ian Patterson's blog, which is hosted on the Scottrade intranet. Scottrade offers a host of benefits, including a 401(k) matching program, plus tuition and wellness program reimbursements and other healthcare-related offerings.

45 Black Hills Corp.

IT promotions: 9%

The IT shop at this Rapid City, S.D.-based energy company is all about teamwork, with an environment characterized by open discussions and a sense of camaraderie. The company offers several work/life balance perks, including flexible working arrangements. IT employees are offered merit increases and bonuses based on achievement of goals.

46 WellPoint Inc.

No. 7 for diversity

The IT team works to keep things simple at this Indianapolis-based health benefits provider, which delivers coverage to about 34 million members, primarily under the Blue Cross and Blue Shield name. The company has recently undertaken projects that have reduced electricity consumption by 4.2%.

47 W.W. Grainger Inc.

No. 8 for career development

The IT team's efforts are evident at this Lake Forest, Ill., company, which distributes maintenance, repair and service equipment: W.W. Grainger's website has received a number of industry recognitions. A talent management program invests in rewarding, recognizing, developing and retaining key employees.

NO.

Intermountain Healthcare

A challenging career path for all staffers is a fundamental commitment.

IT staff members

Anne Marie Saint Felix is just two years into her job, but she's already looking ahead to her next steps. So is her boss. "They're investing in me as an employee so I can build my career here. In past jobs, there weren't really career paths for me to grow," she says.

Saint Felix, a senior IS project manager who has worked in IT for about 15 years, says Intermountain Healthcare's commitment to employees is one of the best things about working at the Salt Lake City-based medical care provider.

Already, she has had plenty of opportunities to get ahead, with on-site training in various technical areas. But Saint Felix says the IT shop does more than offer classes or map out advancement. There's a system of support for what each worker is trying to accomplish.

"My manager is vested in me and will let me vent when I need it or give me help when I need it or let me run with it, which shows his trust in me," she says.

CIO Marc Probst says the culture is what makes his IT department special. "The No. 1 reason people enjoy working here is the culture — the caring mission of it," he says.

Karl West, assistant vice president of IS, agrees that those principles create a supportive, friendly culture. But West, who has been with the company for 16 years, says the department's commitment to challenging work also plays a part in its appeal.

49 Kellogg Co.

Women in IT: 32%
Minorities in IT: 33%

The health and safety of employees is a major focus for this food manufacturer in Battle Creek, Mich. Its "Feeling Great" wellness program, which is voluntary, confidential and fully company-funded, features health risk assessments, biometric screenings and weight management initiatives. To encourage employee participation in the program, Kellogg offers incentives such as reductions in health insurance premiums.

50 University of Miami

No. 3 for diversity

IT workers at this Coral Gables, Fla., university are engaged in myriad global initiatives. For example, they supported researchers from the university's marine school who monitored the environmental impact of the Gulf of Mexico oil spill last year. IT employees also continue to offer telecommunications support to university medical school personnel who are providing healthcare to the people of earthquake-ravaged Haiti.

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NO.

Quintiles Transnational Corp.

IT staffers revel in the challenging assignments here, including fast-paced projects.

IT team members

IT employees at biopharmaceutical services firm Quintiles Transnational use and develop a wide array of leading-edge technologies that power the world's largest clinical research organization and are speeding new medicines and treatments to the market.

For IT staffers, "the opportunity is there for innovation," says Joe Goodgame, director of IT. "I haven't seen a circumstance where people who want to innovate haven't been given the opportunity. From a cutting-edge technology perspective, we do launch very quickly into new areas where we see a value." Goodgame's past three assignments focused on innovation, including bringing master data management into the company.

Durham, N.C.-based Quintiles tries to keep travel to a minimum and uses Web-enabled conferencing to encourage collaboration between peers and clients around the globe.

Employee perks include home IT equipment reimbursement every three years — even for tech toys not used solely for work.

51 Commonwealth Financial Network

IT turnover: 8%
IT promotions: 12%

After three years of service, employees at this financial services company in Waltham, Mass., are eligible to "rent" (free of charge) vacation homes owned by the chairman of Commonwealth, including ski condos in Maine, a property in the Dominican Republic, a home on Cape Cod and condos in Key Biscayne, Fla.

53 Automatic Data Processing Inc.

Training days for IT: 5

IT has a seat at the table at this tax-filing and payroll processing service in Roseland, N.J. IT is represented not only on the corporate executive committee, but on every business unit executive committee as well, enabling IT staffers to work with colleagues from other departments. Employees have several work/life balance programs to choose from, including the flexibility to work from home.

54 The Mitre Corp.

No. 3 for training

The flexible work arrangements program is a top benefit for employees at this not-for-profit science and engineering organization in McLean, Va. Subject to management approval, employees can take advantage of flextime, telework, part-time and job-sharing arrangements on an occasional or ongoing basis. Mitre offers a slew of on-site conveniences, including dry cleaning services and fitness centers.

55 Eastman Chemical Co.

IT promotions: 9%

The newest employees at this chemical firm in Kingsport, Tenn., go through a formal yet flexible on-boarding program. The employee's entire workgroup is involved, and the new hire is paired with a mentor. As part of the development process, employees can work in various areas of the organization to build their experience.

56 Raymond James Financial Inc.

Women in IT: 36%
Minorities in IT: 17%

Plan for the future while you work at this financial services firm in St. Petersburg, Fla. The company offers a diverse package that includes not only traditional 401(k) and Roth IRA plans, but also profit sharing, employee stock ownership and employee stock purchase plans, and securities discounts.

57 Monsanto Co.

Training days for IT: 5

IT employees at this biotechnology company in St. Louis are recognized for their good work. Programs feature informal, grass-roots recognition, as well as highly structured, departmentwide recognition. Career development opportunities are available through the IT department's Leadership Development Forum, created to help high-potential IT employees hone their leadership skills and build relationships.

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Bank of America

[1] ***Keynote Q2 2011 Banker Scorecard, April 2011.***
[2] ***Javelin 2010 Banking Identity Safety Scorecard, December 2010.***
[3] ***Corporate Insight's 2010 Bank Monitor Awards, January 2011.***

NO.

The Sherwin-Williams Co.

The IT ranks will grow again this year, as staffers help to drive business efforts.

IT staffers

Think of it as an IT career with a splash of color. For Denis Hart, one of the great things about working for paint manufacturer Sherwin-Williams has been the opportunity for travel that its rapidly expanding global business presents. Hart, lead analyst for the Unix server group, recently took advantage of opportunities to travel to Italy and South America to support IT projects. "Those things keep it fresh for me," he says.

But it's the culture of innovation and respect that has kept him at the Cleveland-based company for 13 years. IT is accepted as part of the effort to drive sales. In meetings, says CIO Tom Lucas, "you'd be hard-pressed to distinguish between a marketing person and an IT person. We're very attuned to the business."

And as the company continues to grow — IT staffing will expand by 8% this year — there are plenty of opportunities to work with the latest technologies. "We're more on the leading edge than we've ever been before," says Hart. "The amount of change happening has only accelerated."

59 International Paper

Training days for IT: 4

Since 1952, the charitable foundation at this Memphis-based paper manufacturer has supported nonprofit groups, with a primary focus on environmental education and literacy programs for young children. The foundation's signature program is "Coins 4 Kids," which provides meals in schools for more than 72,000 children in poverty-stricken areas near Nairobi, Kenya.

60 Raytheon Co.

Women in IT: 26%
Minorities in IT: 21%

This Waltham, Mass.-based defense contractor doesn't leave diversity to chance. Its IT Diversity Team was chartered to help build an inclusive culture that recognizes uniqueness, empowers each employee, values all contributors, and leverages the company's diverse workforce to maximize its competitive advantage.

61 Transocean Ltd.

Training days for IT: 5

This deep-water drilling company, with U.S. headquarters in Houston, maintains a four-and-a-half-day workweek. Employees' regular schedules include nine-hour workdays Monday through Thursday and a half-day on Friday. The IT department has both formal and informal recognition programs and practices, including a "Wall of Honor" where certificates of achievement are posted. Other rewards include bonuses, trophies and gift certificates.

62 The George Washington University

No. 1 for training

The George Washington University is the largest private employer in the District of Columbia. The main campus covers 30 square blocks in the Foggy Bottom neighborhood of the nation's capital. The school offers an employee tuition benefit under which 96% of tuition and expenses are paid for eligible workers, with no repayment obligation.

63 Jack Henry & Associates Inc.

No. 10 for retention

Each year, employees honor late company founder Jack Henry on his birthday by following his dress code of shorts and a Hawaiian shirt. The rest of the year, it's casualwear for most workers at this Monett, Mo., provider of computer systems to banks and credit unions. Flexible work arrangements include telecommuting and flex hours.

64 Northern Trust Corp.

IT promotions: 6%

Diversity is a big issue at this company, which has operations in more than 40 countries and employees in 80 offices throughout North America, Europe, the Middle East and the Asia-Pacific region. Employees at this Chicago-based multibank holding company can contribute to diversity and inclusion through their participation in various Business Resource Councils, including the Advancing Professionals Resource Council, the Asian Leadership Resource Council, and the Black Business Resource Council.

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65 Health Care Service Corp.

IT turnover: 7%
IT promotions: 6%

High-performing IT employees at this Chicago-based health insurer can win STARS awards each year. In 2010, IT awarded more than $600,000 to individuals and teams that went above and beyond their regular job duties. The company continually creates campaigns and programs centered on health and wellness. This year, the company has a goal to lose 30 tons of personal weight, or 4 pounds per person. Employees voluntarily take part and track their weight via an online tool.

66 BNSF Railway Co.

Women in IT: 25%
Minorities in IT: 22%

IT employees at this Texas-based railway are given opportunities to broaden and deepen their skills through challenging assignments and training, tuition reimbursement and mentoring programs. The company also offers competitive pay, merit increases, rewards and recognition programs, a benefits and retirement package, and an annual bonus based on company and individual performance. Most IT employees work at the Fort Worth corporate headquarters, a campus with a cafeteria, a fitness center, a two-mile walking path and a large corporate art collection.

67 Temple University

IT turnover: 6%
IT promotions: 6%

The IT group at this Philadelphia university has its very own internal training department, in addition to the professional and personal development training offered through the university's HR department. As part of a university environment, employees have special access to music, dance and arts performances and to sporting events. Technology investments are ongoing: The Temple 2020 plan calls for more than $500 million in new facilities by 2020, including a state-of-the-art library that incorporates the latest technology.

69 Partners HealthCare System Inc.

Training days for IT: 7

This Boston-based healthcare company makes it a habit to listen to its employees. Employee feedback spurred the creation of annual "career conversations" between employees and their managers to ensure that career goals are discussed and specific actions are taken to assist employees with their goals. Those conversations are distinct from the performance management process, when managers can request that employees develop additional skills that are needed in their current jobs or for new roles. Employees who participate in this program can use up to 40 hours annually to pursue the actions specified in their plans.

NO.

Publix Super Markets Inc.

IT staffers are given project ownership, and relish the sense of pride that follows.

IT staffers

Todd Sturdivant had worked at Publix Super Markets for a year when the CIO greeted him by name and asked about his work. He was impressed that the top IT leader would take an interest in what he was doing, considering he's just one of hundreds of IT employees.

He says it's that kind of friendly atmosphere that has kept him there for 10 years.

Sturdivant, who moved from a software quality assurance analyst position to his current systems analyst/programmer job, also appreciates the opportunities to advance.

"That's probably my favorite thing about Publix in general and the IT department — this philosophy to promote from within," he says. "I love the ability to come in and have that sense of 'I own it' and 'I can drive that.'"

Stephanie Jobe, manager of store systems engineering, says the support she gets from colleagues, along with the on-the-job training offered by Publix, has kept her with the company for 18 years. She started as a store clerk and is now manager of store systems engineering.

She says she also likes the fact that Lakeland, Fla.-based company is investing in technology.

"It's never dull. Every day I come in here and it's something different. We get to stay with the latest trends," she says.

Renee Kelly, director of business application delivery, says the whole package — from the benefits to the technology training — is what makes people want to work in Publix's IT department.

"It's the entire atmosphere," she says. "We're all in it together."

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70 Quest Diagnostics Inc.

No. 9 for career development, No. 9 for diversity

This Madison, N.J.-based clinical laboratory has a spotlight on health. The company's HealthyQuest program educates employees about their individual risk factors and encourages behaviors that will lead to better health.

71 Northwestern Mutual

This Milwaukee-based life insurance company offers employees both a fully funded defined benefits pension plan and a 401(k) defined contribution plan, with a 50% match on the first 6% that an employee contributes. An on-site health clinic is staffed by a physician, nurse practitioners and registered nurses.

72 Edward Jones

IT promotions: 7%

There's a lot to like at this St. Louis-based financial services firm, one of the largest operating partnerships in the U.S. Any employee in good standing with at least three years of service can be considered for limited partnership.

73 Comerica Bank

At this Dallas-based bank holding company, the IT employees don't sit idle. The Information Services Activity Committee is made up of employees who volunteer to host a variety of events throughout the year for IT staffers, with a focus on supporting the community through charitable giving.

74 National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

In response to an employee suggestion, this Arlington, Va.-based organization, which represents consumer-owned power cooperatives, started offering paid time off for volunteer work to encourage employees to help enrich surrounding communities.

75 Aflac Inc.

This Columbus, Ga.-based insurance firm knows that employees can help one another succeed. Its TEACH mentoring program enables employees to take active roles in their development and opens doors to discussions between managers and employees.

NO.

Hess Corp.

This global powerhouse holds appeal for IT staffers who crave travel and flexibility.

IT managers

If jet-setting around the world to take on IT projects in Kuala Lumpur, London, Jakarta, New York and Houston sounds intriguing, then global energy company Hess would rank high on your list as one of the best places to work in IT. IT employees at the Manhattan-based company routinely work on projects with colleagues on six continents.

Warren Price, IT manager of service delivery, has worked in every Hess office in the world – some for more than a year at a time – to implement global technology standards or to help open a new office. "For the last 10 years, I worked on the oil exploration and production side [of the business]," he says. "Now I'm working in marketing and refining, so I'm experiencing the full value chain and really getting an understanding of how both sides of the business work."

When the wanderlust starts to wane, don't worry. Hess' largest offices are equipped with "global telepresence" rooms, and HD-quality videoconferencing is built into conference rooms across the company for project coordination and planning.

Price now lives near Hess' Woodbridge, N.J., office, where he takes advantage of flextime to accommodate his young family's schedule. "I get to come in early and leave early," he says.

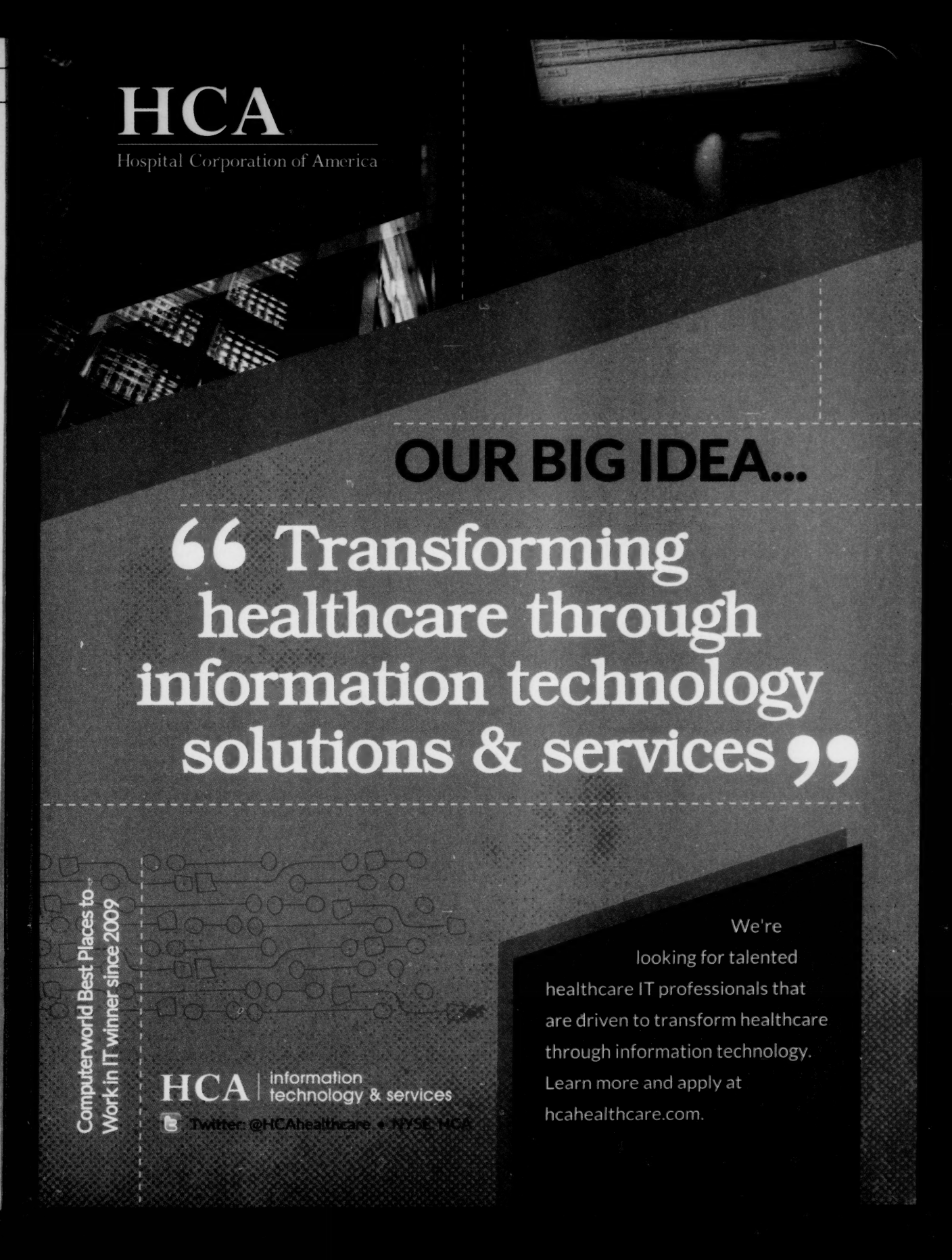
76 Maritz Holdings Inc.

IT employees at this Fenton, Mo., company, which designs employee incentive and reward programs, value their department's flexible approach to working arrangements and scheduling. They can even take part in training programs remotely: The recent Maritz Virtual Technology Conference took place online, and employees could log in via the Internet to participate in sessions on the latest business technology news and innovations.

77 Paychex Inc.

Training days for IT: 15

IT employees at this payroll accounting firm in Rochester, N.Y., give back, with proceeds from an annual charity poker tournament supporting breast cancer research, Habitat for Humanity, and food and clothing drives. Every year, the IT department adopts families in need during the holidays, giving them food, gifts and refurbished PCs. Employees have also formed a partnership with an inner-city school to encourage students with top grades to stay motivated.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NO.

Cummins Inc.

IT staffers feel a powerful connection to the company's mission and culture.

IT staffers

For Kyle Benning, the impact of his work at global power company Cummins extends well beyond his position as an IT functional excellence champion. Benning says he sees his job as having an impact on the Columbus, Ind., company and the community. It's part of what makes Cummins a great place to work, he says. "The environment becomes more than just about your job; it's about [whether you're] making things better," he says.

Bruce Carver, CIO and vice president of Cummins Business Services, says IT is on the forefront of supporting the company's growth. He regularly communicates that message to his global staff so they feel connected to the company's bigger goals and to their own roles in fulfilling those objectives. IT employees say it's that kind of environment, combined with challenging IT work and opportunities for training and advancement, that keeps them happy.

"We believe people want companies to stand for more than a paycheck," says Madhavi Isanaka, executive director for IT and corporate responsibility for Cummins' power generation business.

79 Xerox Corp.

IT turnover: 3%
IT promotions: 7%

This Norwalk, Conn.-based maker of copiers and document management systems keeps a close eye on its talent pipeline. The company's "Build Our Talent" program supports learning and professional development through formal and informal training. An extensive e-learning library is available to all IT employees. A tool called myMap uses questions and resource links to help employees determine their career paths and identify the steps they have to take and the support they need.

81 Erickson Living

Training days for IT: 7

The IT department at this Catonsville Md.-based operator of retirement communities is at the center of fun activities. The group created a "Fun Committee," which organizes a variety of events throughout the year, including potluck lunches, pancake breakfasts and tailgate parties.

82 Rackspace US Inc.

Women in IT: 20%
Minorities in IT: 35%

IT employees at this San Antonio-based managed hosting services company may participate in IT certification and testing programs that include classroom instruction and practical applications of the curriculum. All employees can take part in several health and wellness programs designed to foster a healthier approach to work and life. This year, Rackspace introduced a program that includes on-site Weight Watchers meetings and a class for new parents.

83 State Street Corp.

IT turnover: 7%
IT promotions: 7%

This Boston-based financial services firm offers a long list of techie perks. Its IT and Business Transformation programs provide IT employees worldwide with opportunities to enhance their skills and knowledge and be part of hot technology projects. For example, over the next three years, State Street will move its applications and server processing into a private cloud environment.

84 Applied Materials Inc.

Training days for IT: 10

IT career development at this maker of semiconductor production equipment in Santa Clara, Calif., runs the gamut. Employees can work toward advanced degrees or professional and technical certifications, or they can take advantage of in-house and on-the-job training. All employees are required to participate in a minimum of five days of training per year.

85 MetroStar Systems

Women in IT: 29%
Minorities in IT: 47%

This IT services company in Reston, Va., sets aside cash for training each of its employees. The company puts together career development plans for every worker, and it allocates a specific amount of money annually that each person can put toward training, memberships in professional organizations and other professional development activities. Employees are rewarded for each certification earned.

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86 Compuware Corp.

IT promotions: 14%

This software and IT services provider in Detroit offers its employees a raft of perks, including an extensive list of benefits aimed at helping people achieve work/life balance, such as subsidized and on-site day care and an on-site cafeteria. Also offered are medical and dental insurance, with same-sex domestic partner coverage options.

87 H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center & Research Institute Inc.

Tampa, Fla.-based Moffitt, one of the National Cancer Institute's elite Comprehensive Cancer Centers, lets all of its employees develop their own working arrangements and schedules. Options include working from home, flextime scheduling, job sharing and more. The newly created Knowledge Management Services department has a renewed focus on helping employees develop technical skills.

88 Kraft Foods Inc.

IT promotions: 6%

All employees at this food manufacturer in Northfield, Ill., stay connected via social media channels and collaboration tools, including audio and video podcasts. IT has been involved in new initiatives such as the "Bring Your Own Computer to Work" program.

89 We Energies

Training days for IT: 4

This Milwaukee-based utility, which serves customers in Wisconsin and Michigan, has a new wellness program called the Health Enhancement Initiative, which promotes healthy lifestyle habits at work and at home. The utility has on-site fitness facilities, and employees can take advantage of discounts on memberships at more than 40 health clubs.

91 GlobalScape Inc.

Training days for IT: 5

IT employees at this San Antonio-based software company get to design their own work spaces and set their own schedules. Under the company flextime policy, employees can begin their workdays as early as 6 a.m. or stay as late as 6 p.m. The company pays 100% of the cost of medical, dental and vision insurance coverage for employees and their families.

NO.

Wheels Inc.

Certifications, training and degrees are offered on the company's dime.

IT staffers [illegible]

Employees at Wheels, an automobile fleet leasing company in Des Plaines, Ill., are encouraged to be proactive in seeking out training, certification programs, and even undergraduate or graduate degree programs to further their career development. And for the most part, it's a free ride, courtesy of the company.

"Employees are never denied training opportunities," says Scott Jucovics, manager of IT-business operations. Wheels covers the full cost of certification programs and community college degrees and 75% of the cost of other college programs.

Wheels has a culture of inclusion; Jucovics explains that IT helps ensure that the business side of Wheels "is as responsive to clients' needs and as productive as possible. There is no 'us and them' mentality; we succeed or we fail as a group."

— **Linke** *is a writer and editor living outside of Boston.*

92 Allstate Insurance Co.

Women in IT: 41%

Minorities in IT: 31%

This Northbrook, Ill.-based insurer is serious about its green initiatives. The company recently opened a gold-level LEED-certified data center in Rochelle, Ill., and launched a paper reduction campaign that achieved a 21% reduction in just seven months. Managers are encouraged to support employees who volunteer in the community, and an internal Web portal helps connect employees with nonprofit organizations in need.

93 Adventist Health System

Training days for IT: 5

The work that IT professionals do at this healthcare organization in Winter Park, Fla., directly supports caregivers. For example, the computerized order-entry system allows physicians to place orders directly into the electronic medical record system, eliminating paper, reducing errors and decreasing the amount of time it takes to help patients. In 2010, the IT team brought 14 of Adventist's hospitals onto this system.

100 BEST PLACES TO WORK IN IT 2011

By the Numbers

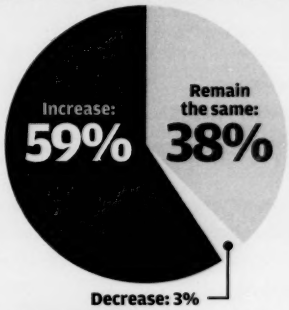
SOURCE: SURVEYS OF THE 100 BEST PLACES TO WORK IN IT 2011

THE TYPICAL BEST PLACE

Revenue	**$12.6B**
IT budget	**$281.4M**
Total number of employees	**25,953**
Total number of IT employees	**1,042**
Average workweek	**42 hours**

HIRING FORECAST

Percentage of organizations that in 2011 expect the number of U.S.-based IT staffers to:



Average expected increase:	Average expected decrease:
7.6%	**3.7%**

STAFFING

Average IT staff **turnover rate**, latest fiscal year	**7.3%**
Average percentage of IT staff **promoted**, latest fiscal year	**10.1%**

TRAINING

Average percentage of **training conducted in person**	**62%**
Average percentage of **training conducted remotely**	**38%**
Average number of **training days for each IT employee** in latest fiscal year	**5**
Percentage of organizations that said their **training budgets per IT employee will increase** in 2011 compared with 2010	**53%**
Average cost per IT employee for all training in latest fiscal year	**$1,644**

M&A ACTIVITY

Merged with or acquired organizations or divested business units since Jan. 1, 2010	**38%**
Percentage of IT employees at all organizations **affected** by such activity **(laid off, transferred, etc.)**	**9%**

COMMUNICATION

Percentage of organizations that do the following:

Offer IT staffers **formal mentoring programs**	**61%**
Survey IT staffers about job satisfaction **once a year**	**53%**
Survey IT staffers about job satisfaction **more than once a year**	**18%**

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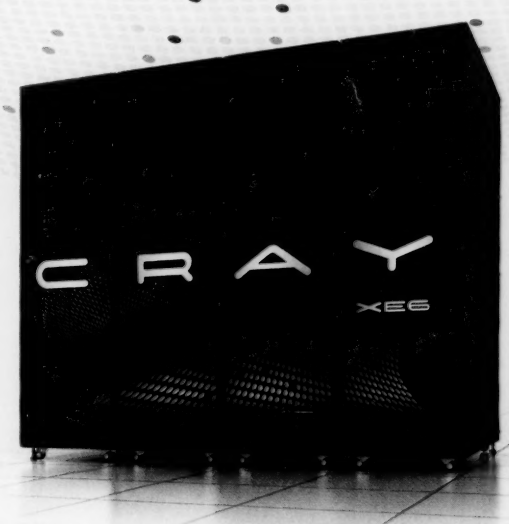

AMD Opteron 64

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100 BEST PLACES TO WORK IN IT 2011

WOMEN IN IT

31% of IT staff members are women.

31% of IT managers are women.

MINORITIES IN IT

29% of IT staff members are minorities.

19% of IT staff managers are minorities.

COMPENSATION

84% of organizations have **budgeted for salary increases** for IT employees in 2011.

84% have **budgeted for bonuses** for IT employees in 2011

93% contribute to employees' 401(k) or 403(b) plans.

TOP 5 COMPENSATION BENEFITS

Percentage of organizations that offer the following:

401(k)/403(b) plan	99%
Individual employee performance bonuses	89%
Overtime pay	88%
Employee referral bonus program	77%
Profit-sharing or employee stock ownership program	52%

TOP 5 OVERALL BENEFITS

Percentage of organizations that offer the following:

Health insurance	100%
Paid vacation	100%
Employee assistance programs	100%
Flexible hours	99%
Pretax spending accounts for uncovered medical expenses	97%

VACATION

16 **DAYS** of paid vacation, on average, are provided **after one year of service.**

23 **DAYS** of paid vacation, on average, are offered **after 10 years of service.**

WHAT THEY DO

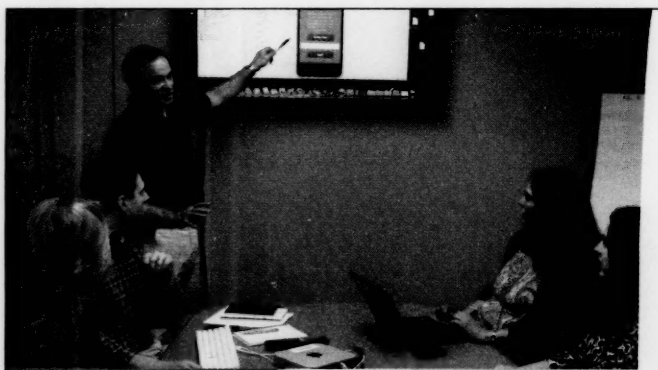
Percentage of organizations in the following industries:

Health/medical services	13%
IT consulting	13%
Finance	12%
Energy/utilities	11%
Insurance	8%
Manufacturing	6%
Education	5%
Food industry	4%
Business services/consulting	3%
All other industries	25%

WHERE THEY ARE

Breakout of organizations, by region:

North Central	33
South Atlantic	23
Mid-Atlantic	15
Pacific	11
South Central	10
New England	6
Mountain	2



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Last year, the company launched an innovation challenge, the MPrize. The concept was to develop new mobile technology by harnessing the imagination, knowledge and entrepreneurial spirit of Maritz. Over 100 employees participated and at the end of the contest, Maritz had 18 fully developed mobile prototypes.

So whether you want to develop mobile apps or some other type of cutting-edge software applications, Maritz is the place where people and technology come together to create incredible solutions.

Maritz

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100 BEST PLACES TO WORK IN IT 2011

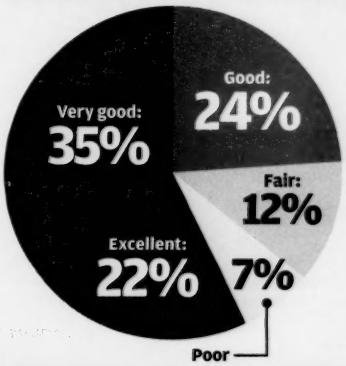
By the Numbers

SOURCE: 29,308 IT WORKER RESPONSES TO THE EMPLOYEE PORTION OF THE BEST PLACES SURVEY FROM THE FINAL 100 ORGANIZATIONS SELECTED

WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU ABOUT YOUR JOB?

Working in an **enjoyable** environment	94%
Being **fairly compensated** for the work I do	93%
Having access to **training and opportunities** that further my skills	88%
Having the means and opportunity to **further my career**	87%
Working in a **challenging** environment	81%
Being able to work with **cutting-edge technology**	75%

HOW DO YOU RATE IT DEPARTMENT MORALE?



WHAT'S THE BEST BENEFIT?

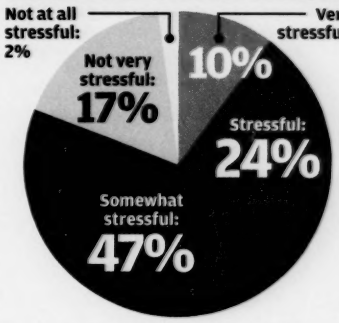
Paid vacation	75%
Health insurance	73%
Profit-sharing/employee stock ownership program/ 401(k)/403(b) plan	53%
Telecommuting	49%
Flexible hours	45%
Bonuses	44%

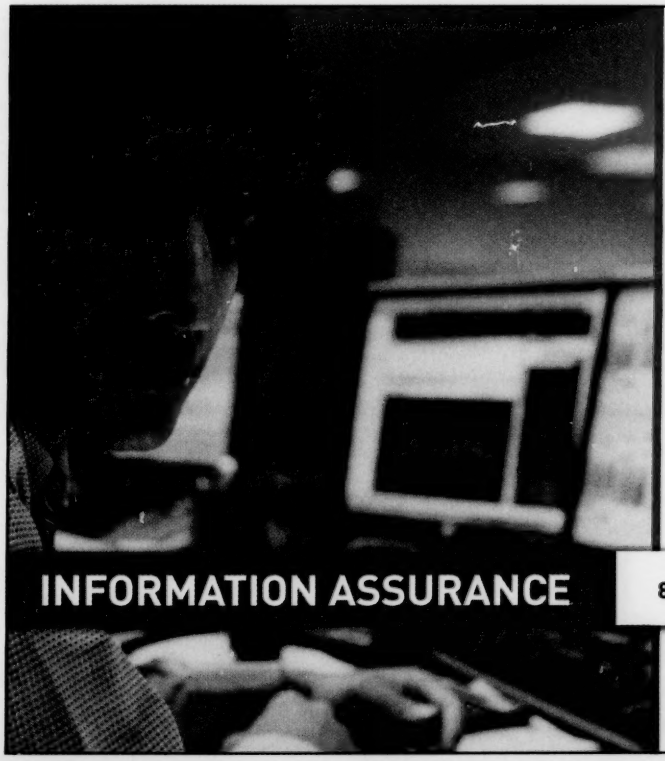
HOW DO YOU RATE YOUR BENEFITS?

Percentage of respondents who were very satisfied or satisfied with the following:

Profit-sharing or employee stock ownership plans	78%
Flexible hours	75%
Health benefits	74%
Training and development programs	73%
Base salary	73%
Bonuses	60%

HOW DO YOU RATE YOUR WORKPLACE STRESS LEVEL?





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Penn National Insurance

Ambitious techies are a hot commodity here, leading companywide projects.

IT staffers

Technology drives business value in many companies, but at Penn National Insurance, technology is the key component in growing the business. The Harrisburg, Pa.-based insurer also prefers to build most of its systems in-house and buy components only when necessary, which makes techies salivate.

"Most IT guys want to use creativity and innovation to build a cutting-edge system. This company allows us to do that," says Web developer Kevin Kauffman, a 10-year veteran.

Kauffman is one of the lead designers and developers of a new Web-based quoting system that's driving growth for the entire corporation. The project is in its fourth year and includes a team of 50 IT staffers.

When it comes to career options, "there's an abundant opportunity for advancement if you want it," Kauffman says. "You just have to take the bull by the horns."

94 CA Technologies

No. 8 for benefits

IT workers at this Islandia, N.Y.-based software vendor have a chance to work with cutting-edge technologies, including virtualization tools, public and private clouds, and supply chain management software. Perks include reimbursement for education- or training-related expenses, a charitable gift program, adoption assistance and veterinary care insurance. Compensation extras include stock awards, bonus opportunities and recognition rewards.

95 Indiana University

Women in IT: 27%
Minorities in IT: 13%

The traditional top-down IT planning process was turned on its head at this public university in Bloomington, Ind., when faculty, staff and students recently partnered to develop the institution's five-year strategic IT plan. At the university's annual IT Workshops for Teens, staffers help Indiana's youth develop math and technology skills.

97 Coca-Cola Enterprises Inc.

Training days for IT: 6

In 2010, the IT team completed one of the biggest technology projects in this Atlanta-based bottling company's history: They successfully cloned the company's entire IT infrastructure, systems and data in about seven months. To ensure that the undertaking was a success, traditional functional boundaries and hierarchies were removed and employees formed virtual global teams.

98 Avanade Inc.

No. 5 for career development

The training programs at this Seattle-based IT services provider are top-notch, featuring a curriculum that focuses on today's hottest technologies. The company's "Rapid Readiness" boot camps are designed to help IT workers get up to speed fast. Avanade pays for all technical certifications and encourages employees to earn them.

99 Baker Hughes Inc.

Training days for IT: 5

The "Six Step" innovation program at this Houston-based oil field service company gives employees a chance to learn about new technologies and vendors. A new group was recently formed within the IT organization for people who want to become IT architects but don't have previous experience in that discipline.

100 FedEx Corp.

Employees of this Memphis-based package-delivery company are encouraged to volunteer their time for causes that are of interest to them. Charitable activities they have participated in include Habitat for Humanity home-building projects, March of Dimes walks and Multiple Sclerosis Society bike rides. The company sponsors an annual "FedEx Cares Day," when employees around the world are allowed to take time off to volunteer for United Way projects in their communities.

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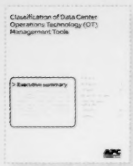

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RANKINGS BY ORGANIZATION SIZE

Based on the number of total U.S. employees:

- **SMALL:** fewer than 2,500 employees
- **MIDSIZE:** 2,500 to 9,999 employees
- **LARGE:** 10,000 or more employees

Best Large Organizations

1	**USAA** (Overall rank: 1)
2	**General Mills Inc.** (3)
3	**Genentech Inc.** (4)
4	**Verizon Wireless** (5)
5	**University of Pennsylvania** (6)
6	**Chesapeake Energy Corp.** (7)
7	**Booz Allen Hamilton Inc.** (9)
8	**Bank of America Corp.** (12)
9	**Sempra Energy** (13)
10	**Kaiser Permanente** (16)

Best Midsize Organizations

1	**Salesforce.com Inc.** (Overall rank: 8)
2	**Quicken Loans Inc.** (10)
3	**SAS Institute Inc.** (14)
4	**Palmetto Health** (22)
5	**Cerner Corp.** (27)
6	**Heartland Payment Systems Inc.** (30)
7	**Altria Group Inc.** (34)
8	**Grant Thornton LLP** (37)
9	**DTE Energy Co.** (39)
10	**Intuit Inc.** (42)

Best Small Organizations

1	**Securian Financial Group Inc.** (Overall rank: 2)
2	**American Fidelity Assurance Co.** (11)
3	**National Information Solutions Cooperative** (15)
4	**CME Group Inc.** (25)
5	**Sacramento Municipal Utility District** (26)
6	**OCLC Online Computer Library Center Inc.** (33)
7	**Black Hills Corp.** (45)
8	**Commonwealth Financial Network** (51)
9	**National Rural Electric Cooperative Association** (74)
10	**MetroStar Systems Inc.** (85)

TOP 10 RANKINGS

Benefits

1	General Mills Inc.
2	University of Pennsylvania
3	Genentech Inc.
4	Booz Allen Hamilton Inc.
5	Sacramento Municipal Utility District
6	Medtronic Inc.
7	Bank of America Corp.
8	CA Technologies
9	OhioHealth
10	Sempra Energy

Training

1	The George Washington University
2	Verizon Wireless
3	The Mitre Corp.
4	USAA
5	Salesforce.com Inc.
6	National Information Solutions Cooperative
7	General Mills Inc.
8	Booz Allen Hamilton Inc.
9	Grant Thornton LLP
10	Securian Financial Group Inc.

Retention

1	USAA
2	Chesapeake Energy Corp.
3	Quicken Loans Inc.
4	SAS Institute Inc.
5	National Information Solutions Cooperative
6	Texas Health Resources
7	Salesforce.com Inc.
8	HCA Inc.
9	Discover Financial Services Inc.
10	Jack Henry & Associates Inc.

Diversity

1	Kaiser Permanente
2	Genentech Inc.
3	University of Miami
4	University of Pennsylvania
5	Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
6	Caesars Entertainment
7	WellPoint Inc.
8	The George Washington University
9	Quest Diagnostics Inc.
10	Cummins Inc.

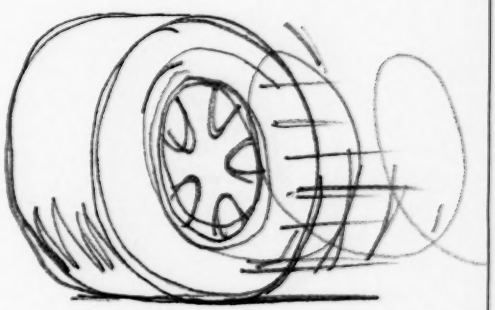
Career Development

1	National Information Solutions Cooperative
2	CME Group Inc.
3	Corning Inc.
4	Altria Inc.
5	Avanade Inc.
6	Texas Health Resources
7	Lehigh Valley Health Network
8	W.W. Grainger Inc.
9	Quest Diagnostics Inc.
10	Securian Financial Group Inc.

SOURCE: COMPUTERWORLD'S 2011 BEST PLACES TO WORK IN IT SURVEY

COMPUTERWORLD 100 BEST PLACES TO WORK IN IT 2011

Just what you'd expect from a company named after a great invention.



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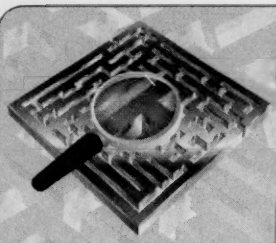

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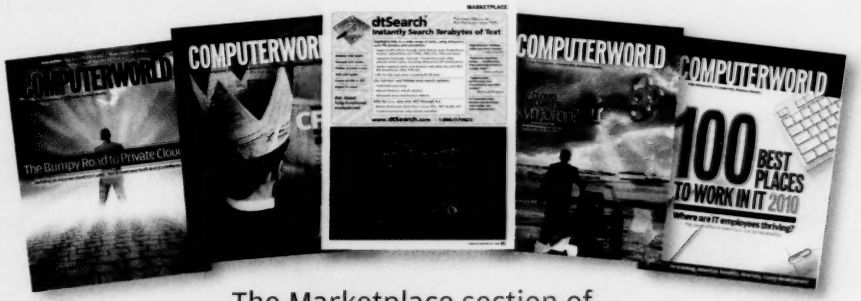

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Source: *Harvey Ad Measurement Study, Computerworld May 10, 2010

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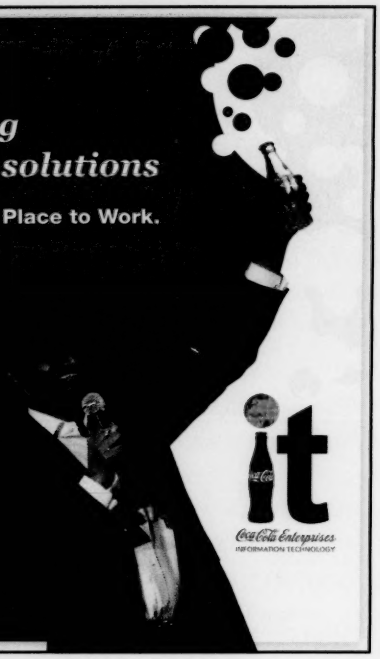

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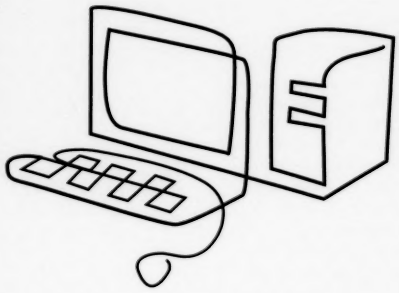

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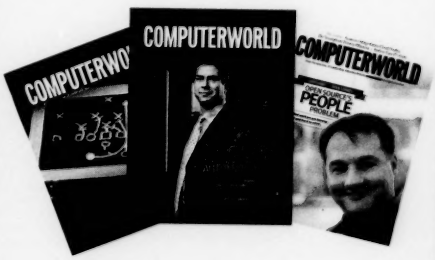

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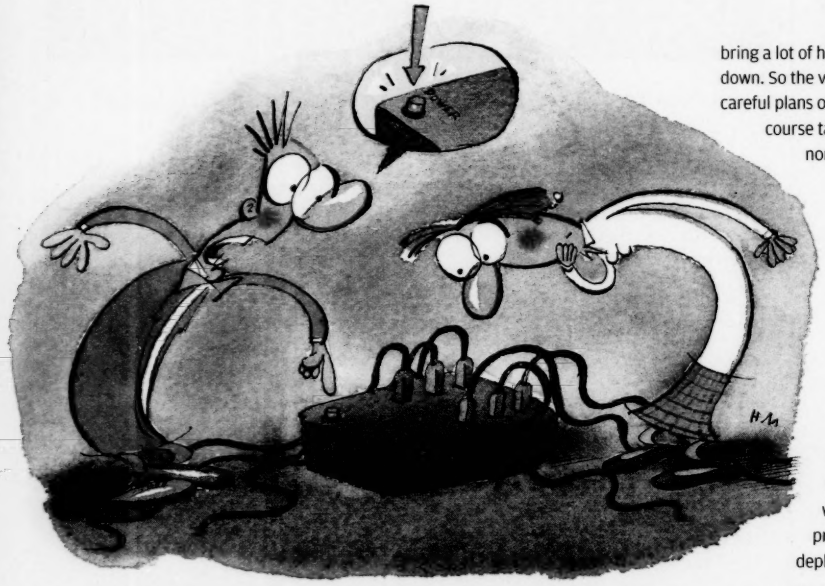

HAL MAYFORTH

bring a lot of high-profile customers down. So the vendor is making *very* careful plans on this one, which of course takes a bit longer than normal. I get a call from my boss. 'Where is the schedule?' he asks. The vendor is working on it, I reply. Boss replies, 'No good. Management wants to see the schedule. Call the vendor and get it.' Let's see – when the vendor takes the time to create a good plan, things go well. Anyone want to predict how this risky deployment will turn out?"

Wanna Bet?

IT support tech arrives at the office only to discover that his company's buildings are without power. "In fact, power was out in the whole industrial corridor," says a pilot fish on the scene. "The tech decided to unplug all the servers and turn off all the PC UPSs so that when power returned, things wouldn't blow up. Then he remarked to his co-worker, 'I wonder how many calls the customer service folks will make because they can't turn on their PCs.' His co-worker replied, 'Come on, it's the 21st century! I'm sure they know how to turn on a UPS.' A small wager was made. About an hour later, power was restored, the servers were plugged back in – and the tech's phone started ringing off the hook. The customer service folks, one after another, told the tech that their PCs were dead. He explained that they needed to turn their UPSs back on and, one after another, the customer service folks asked, 'Is that the little round button on my PC?' He spent the next half-hour showing each customer service rep where to turn on the UPS."

Faster, Not Better

This pilot fish supervises the work of a contracting company that's deploying software, and he's very happy with the work. "They are very good at it," he says. "They make careful plans for each program to minimize the impact to my network. Up comes a program that is, shall we say, high risk. There's a good chance that if they do this one wrong, they can

Outta Here

It's the early 1990s, and this pilot fish works for a medical software company whose product backs up data onto floppy disks. One day he gets a call from a doctor's office manager. Manager: "I tried to back up my data, but on the third disk, it said 'Write error.' " Fish: You probably had a bad disk. Just insert another and continue on. Manager: "I can't. After the error occurred, I restored the data and now I can't run the program." Fish: You restored from the bad backup? Well, you've got some problems now. You'll have to . . . Manager, interrupting: "Not me, honey. I'm outta here." Reports fish, "About an hour later, the doctor called and told me the program wasn't working – and he couldn't find his office manager."

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OPINION

PAUL GLEN

Projects and Avoidance

> One thing project team leaders have in common: They aren't terribly concerned about their relationships with one another.

SOMETIMES IT FEELS as if our basic assumption about project leadership teams is that they can't work well together — as if collaboration is out of the question and we're ready to settle for a cold peace based on limited communication and mutual suspicion.

But I refuse to accept that. I think we should be able to examine the dynamics of project teams to unravel the causes of these tense relationships and build productive and even enjoyable connections.

The prototypical project leadership team consists of a project manager, a technical lead and a business sponsor. Their relationships form the core of the project culture, which spreads out to the rest of the team. If the core group works well together, displays patience and respect for one another, adopts common goals, and trusts one another, the rest of the team tends to interact accordingly. If they treat each other with legalistic caution and reserve, that too spreads throughout the team. The tone is set in that core.

The three people who fill these roles tend to be very different from one another. They represent the interests of dissimilar parts of the organization and have different educations and professional experiences, which give rise to distinctive assumptions about how businesses should work and even different ways of talking. And they tend to have rather divergent behavioral styles — styles that reflect the very different departmental cultures they represent.

But they do have at least one thing in common — though it seems to undermine their collective collaboration. That one thing is what I call "the avoidance collusion," which stems from the fact that none of them is terribly concerned about his relationships with the other two.

Business sponsors are usually midlevel or senior managers from a functional department who take on project assignments in addition to their daily work. And the project is truly an add-on in their minds; their primary concerns remain their everyday responsibilities. They want their departments to gain the benefits of new technology with minimal disruption. They would like the technology to just magically appear, without much effort on their part. "Just give me the stuff" might be their mantra.

Project managers come from more diverse backgrounds, with some from the technical ranks and others from another business function. Most are driven types who are focused on setting and meeting goals. In an ideal world, they would be able to focus on one substantial project, but in reality, many split their time among ridiculous numbers of ongoing projects. If they can focus on a small number of efforts, they tend to be concerned with planning, tracking, proactive risk management and reporting. If their time is highly fragmented, they tend to just focus on tracking and reporting. Their mantra is "Just get it done — please."

As for tech leads, they tend to be the best techies around. They focus on building the best products that they can, given the constraints under which they operate. Their mantra is "Just leave me alone. I'm creating."

Their commonality is that they don't see their relationships with the others as a means to their own personal ends. They agree that they don't really want to engage with the others.

But this is the illusion. For each of these three roles, the contribution of the others is essential to collective success. To improve project outcomes, we have to embrace the interdependence within these leadership teams. ◆

Paul Glen is CEO of Leading Geeks, an education and consulting firm devoted to unlocking the value of technical people. You can contact him at info@leadinggeeks.com.

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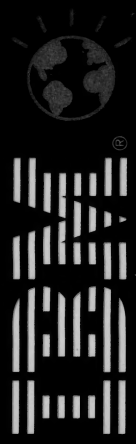

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